Humour and obscenity in Aristophanes.

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Humour and Obscenity in Aristophanes

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Submitted for the award of PhD

King's College London

August, 1999

Abstract of Thesis

This thesis is offered as a contribution to humour theory as well as the elucidation of Aristophanes. In this thesis I articulate a theory of verbal humour which I exemplify with Aristophanes. I also discuss the use of obscenity in Aristophanes' plays.

In Chapter One, I articulate a theory of humour perception via what is, to my knowledge, a hitherto untried 'pragmatic' method, attempting to map the intuitive processes by which a listener of a text decides whether or not that text is humorous. I name this model of humour perception 'The Modal Theory of Text Classification', humour being, I argue, one of four modes into which a listener intuitively categorizes text. In Chapter Two, I analyse a number of humorous passages from the Aristophanic corpus in the light of this theory.

In Chapter Three, I explore the nature of the link between humour and obscenity. I draw parallels between the two and suggest that the obscenity in Aristophanes' plays may have had a relaxing and cohesive effect on his original audience.

In Chapter Four I outline a system of textual analysis which is then used in Chapter Five for examining a continuous piece of Aristophanic verse, namely *Peace* 819-921. In these chapters the interest is in the micro-level of the text and initially I investigate issues such as how we might establish the tone and register of lexical features and how given sound effects may strike the listener. In the process of analysing Aristophanic text, I demonstrate my model of humour perception in use and make discoveries about Aristophanes' verse, namely that it is characterized by its playful, exuberant tone. One reason why Aristophanes' text impinges as playful, I conclude, is because he often toys with the boundary between seriousness and humour.

The thesis also contains an appendix in which I find correspondences between elements which Aristophanes represents as key to the act of composition and elements of my own theory of humour.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Naturally, my biggest debt is owed to my supervisor, Prof. Michael Silk, who has provided both fruitful ideas for the direction of my research and thoughtful critiques of my work in progress. This thesis would have been much the poorer without his assistance. I have given a number of papers on subjects relating to this thesis and thanks must also go to the audiences of these for much useful feedback and criticism. I am also grateful to Helen Raynor for her help with Chapter Three, to my father, who undertook a critique of the final draft of the thesis at record speed, and to my partner, Owain Thomas, for his patient criticism of much of this thesis and for the time he has spent with me discussing my work.

Financial assistance for the writing of this thesis has come from two sources. I was fortunate enough to be the recipient of a *British Academy* Studentship for which I am most grateful. Many thanks must go to my parents, too, for their constant generosity.

Encouragement, inspiration and support have come from too many directions to mention - friends, family and students alike. A number kindly read final versions of my chapters for me - Anne Alwis, Malcolm Burns, Tania Gergel, Michael Hoban, Yumna Khan and Rebecca Williams. Lastly, I should also like to thank Malcolm Burns for a quite different service, namely furnishing me with an endless supply of appalling jokes, the few of which that have made it into the final version of the thesis being only the tip of a highly dubious iceberg.

Introduction

This thesis began as a PhD research proposal in 1994 entitled, 'Aristophanes: Language, Humour and Sexuality'. The time seemed ripe for such a project. Henderson's 1975 book, *The Maculate Muse*, had recently been revised and re-issued in paperback (1991), a sign of its continuing status as the standard work on Aristophanic obscenity, its preliminary chapters on the nature, workings and use of obscenity remaining largely unchallenged since its original publication. In addition, American humour theorists such as Raskin and Attardo were attracting increasing attention from outside their own discipline. Their cognitive, essentialist approach to answering the question 'what is humour?' was being endorsed and built upon by other scholars, many of whom published in the newly arrived journal *Humor* (inaugurated in 1988). There was obviously work to be done in a number of areas: in questioning the *communis opinio* that had taken hold in the discipline of humour studies; in re-examining the subject of Aristophanic obscenity; and, in the light of the new interest in humour studies, in looking at Aristophanes as a writer of *humorous* drama. Such have been the driving principles behind this piece of research and they are reflected in the final title: 'Humour and Obscenity in Aristophanes'.

This thesis is, then, offered as an elucidation of Aristophanes through a new version of humour theory, a study of obscenity, and a system of textual analysis. These elements are connected in the following structure. In Section A, *Humour*, I attempt to define humour by a hitherto untried method. Rather than adopt an essentialist approach, I attempt instead to map the intuitive processes by which a listener decides whether or not the text he is reading or listening to is humorous. I subsequently test this model of humour perception by seeing how it accounts for the humorous nature of a variety of Aristophanic extracts. In Section B, *Obscenity*, I investigate the nature of the link between obscenity and humour. I also offer an alternative to Henderson's view that obscene language is a substitute for physical violence. I suggest, *inter alia*, that obscenity can have a cohesive and relaxing effect on a group. In Section C, *Aristophanes*, I outline a system of textual analysis which I then use to make a detailed examination of a section of Aristophanic verse (*Peace* 819-921). This focus on the micro-level of

Aristophanes' text allows not only the model of humour perception to be tested substantially, but also proper scrutiny of the constantly changing nature of Aristophanes' verse to be made. In the appendix I look at evidence for Aristophanes' view of the act of composition and attempt to locate parallels between this and my own model of humour.

It will be noted that while I have chosen to investigate verbal humour in this thesis, I have, in general, avoided the subject of visual humour. The reasons for this are twofold. First, there are concerns of length and of focus in a thesis such as this. Second, and more important, there are obvious problems connected with reconstructing the costume and gestures of Aristophanic drama. Arguments built on reconstructions, however plausible, may nonetheless result in dubious conclusions, with hypothesis built upon hypothesis. This said, I have of course dealt with visual humour when it has a bearing on our understanding of the text. What is more, costume and gesture feature heavily in the discussion conducted in the appendix.

Some notes now on more practical matters. When discussing the reception of text, be it by a putative member of Aristophanes' original audience or an 'ideal', ahistoric listener, it has been my practice to refer to 'he' and 'him'. This is partly for historic reasons, partly for convenience. Other options, such as '(s)he' or simply 'she', did not seem preferable in the context of the present study.

When quoting Aristophanes I have generally followed the text of Sommerstein's *Aris and Phillips* series. This has allowed me to accompany the Greek with Sommerstein's translations which, in my view, admirably capture the spirit of the Greek. When, on occasion, I have modified Sommerstein's translations, I have noted this in the footnotes. The handful of times I have quoted from the *Ploutos* (a play not yet edited by Sommerstein), or from fragments, I have used the OCT and Kassel-Austin PCG. In Chapter Five, however, in my analysis of the *Peace* passage, I have followed the text of Olson (1998), the play's most recent editor. As far as the quotation of other ancient authors is concerned, I have followed the most recent OCT text. Where there are important textual variations between editions, however, I have noted these either in the main body of the thesis or in footnotes.

A note on abbreviations. In referring to ancient authors and their works I have generally followed the abbreviations used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

Where I have departed from this practice, the abbreviations used are self-explanatory.

Finally, I should also note that the works cited in my bibliography are only those which are either specifically referred to in the thesis or which have helped shape my ideas. I should add that many commentaries and lexica used in the preparation of this thesis are *not* listed. I have omitted these in order to avoid unnecessary prolixity.

Section A: Humour

Chapter One

The Perception of Humour: The Modal Theory of Text Classification

In this chapter I shall outline a definition of verbal humour via what is, to my knowledge, a hitherto untried 'pragmatic' method. This involves attempting to map the intuitive processes by which a listener or reader of a text decides whether or not that text is humorous.[1] My methodology proposes that each listener or reader makes this decision on a pre-theoretical, intuitive basis. The central project of this chapter is to investigate the process by which this decision is made. In order to explain this methodology more fully and more precisely, I shall employ a number of linguistic terms, which will need to be defined. I shall also attempt to clarify a number of terms connected with humour and humour research. When a word which will subsequently be used in a technical sense is either introduced or being defined, it will appear in bold type.

This chapter comprises an articulation of what will be referred to as the 'modal theory of text classification'. The attempt has been made to present this theory in as concise a way as possible, and as a result some of its implications are touched on only briefly. The aspects and implications of the theory which possess special relevance for the study of Aristophanes will be explored in the next chapter.

Definition of Linguistic Terms

In explaining the methodology I shall use in defining 'humour', I shall appeal to the notion of the **extensional** and **intensional** definition of words, and to

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[1]Suls 1983 is the only scholar known to me who states an explicit interest in (39), 'the operation of mental processes for the comprehension and appreciation of humor'; see also ib. 1972. Oring 1995, 230, stresses too that, 'humour is not a structure of ideas but the perception of such a structure.' The term 'pragmatic' is borrowed from Abrams 1954, meaning (15), 'criticism that...is ordered toward the audience'.

the concept of a given word's **denotata** and **lexemes**. In my definition of these terms, I am following the lead of Lyons, Saeed and Crystal.[2]

Owing to the inherent ambiguities in the term 'word', linguists tend to differentiate between forms or tokens on the one hand, and lexemes on the other. When we use a 'word' in speech or writing, it is a **form** or **token** we use. Thus in the following sentences:

He was walking along.
The boy walks to school.
We all like to walk.

'walking', 'walks', and 'walk' are **forms** or **tokens**. We would also wish to say that in some sense these forms evoke a common meaning. If we were to look up the **citation form** of 'walk' in a dictionary, for example, we would expect to find one definition which applied to all three of these **forms**, a definition we would no doubt consider to be the meaning of the 'word'. It is a 'word' in this abstract sense that linguists call a **lexeme**. Thus the three forms cited above can be said to be associated with the same lexeme which we might label 'walk'. In his *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, Crystal defines a lexeme as 'the abstract unit underlying...sets of grammatical variants', and glosses such units as those 'which are conveniently listed in the dictionary as separate entries.'[3]

There are different and competing ways in which one might define a given word, a dictionary-style definition of a lexeme being but one. For example, if the word to be defined is context-specific, it will be defined differently from when it is used in a non-context-specific way. In the sentence 'I see the gate', a specific gate is referred to, and a context-specific definition of the word 'gate' as used in this piece of text will differ greatly from a dictionary-style definition of its lexeme. In the sentence 'I see the gate', 'gate' has a specific **denotatum**, a denotatum of 'gate' being any object to which the word 'gate' refers. The **denotata** of the word 'gate' are, then, all the objects in the universe which might be referred to as 'gates'. The denotatum is also broadly equivalent to a **significatum**, **res** or **referent**.[4]

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[2]Lyons 1977, esp. 206-15, Crystal 1996 and Saeed 1997.

[3]Crystal 1996, s.v. 'lexeme'.

[4]On reference, see Saeed 1997, 25-32.

In order to explain the meaning of a given word when that word is non-context specific, either a dictionary-style definition of the word's lexeme might be given, or otherwise the word's denotata might be appealed to. In defining a word such as 'professor', when the definition is intended to be non-context-specific, the definition of the lexeme 'professor' - 'a university teacher of the highest grade'[5] - might easily enable, say, an intelligent alien to gather its meaning (as long as the concept of 'university' is understood). Such a definition is known as **intensional** and would, in all probability, enable the intelligent alien to identify examples of this word's denotata, i.e. actual examples of professors.[6] With other words, a definition may be more easily rendered through reference to denotata. An **intensional** definition of the word 'trilby', for example - 'a soft felt hat' - is unlikely to enable our intelligent alien to identify precise denotata. Instead, it may be more effective if the procedure is reversed, and the alien allowed to come to an understanding of the lexeme 'trilby' through exposure to its denotata, that is the objects themselves.[7] A definition of a word through reference to its denotata is known as an **extensional** definition.[8]

In my discussion of the perception of humour, the terms **listener**, **speaker** and **text** will be employed. Whenever someone speaks or writes, he produces **text**. The person producing this text is the **speaker** or **writer**, and whoever is listening to or reading the text is the **listener** or **reader**. For the sake of convenience I shall generally restrict myself to the terms **speaker** and **listener**. Whilst this decision has not been made with the intention of suggesting that the spoken word is more important than the written word, it is nevertheless probably true to say that spoken text presents the listener, and thus the researcher, with more problems connected with its assimilation, since it is accompanied by more rather than fewer extra-linguistic factors of the type which I discuss below. For this reason oral communication will be discussed in more detail than written communication. It will be assumed

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[5]Both this and the following definition come from the *Chambers Concise Dictionary*.

[6]On intensionality, see Lyons 1977, 146 and 159, and Saeed 1997, 49 n.2 and 286-9.

[7]In the absence of an intensional definition, our alien's exposure to denotata of 'professors' might serve to be extremely misleading, since he could well take the title to indicate - if its owner is male at least - an inclination to be forgetful or a fondness for blonde cabaret singers.

[8]On extensionality, see Lyons 1977, 146 and 158, and Saeed 1997, 27. Lyons comments (158), 'by the extension of a term is meant the class of things to which it is correctly applied.'

that the problems in assimilating written text are also encountered in assimilating spoken text, whereas the converse is not true.[9]

When a reader is reading a written text, he arrives at a decision about that text's **semantic** content (i.e. 'meaning')[10] through a consideration of the words which constitute the text, i.e. its **linguistic** content. In oral communication there are additional factors of which the listener takes account in order to arrive at a semantic interpretation of the text. The listener also considers the **prosodic** and **paralinguistic** signals which he perceives as having been given by the speaker. By **prosodic** features is meant factors such as the speaker's intonation and stress; by **paralinguistic** features is meant factors such as the volume of the speaker's voice, his gestures, facial expressions and eye movements.[11]

Definition of Terms Concerning Humour

Terms such as 'funny', 'humorous' and 'jokey' are, on occasions, used as synonyms, perhaps because of the lack of a definitive, widely recognized scheme for the classification of terms relating to humour or perhaps because of a human inclination to use words loosely, with more or less precision depending on the circumstances.[12] For the purposes of the present discussion it is useful to stipulate differences between the meaning of these and other words. Despite the looseness with which such words are used in everyday speech, I shall attempt to draw some distinctions.

Laughter: a physiological phenomenon which is elicited through a number of different stimuli. One of these stimuli is humour. For example, laughter might be elicited from a listener who appreciates the punch line of a particular joke. However, laughter is elicited by many other stimuli as well,

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[9]Although see n.72 below. It might be argued that an exception to this rule is that written text runs a risk of ambiguity which spoken text does not for the very reason that it is *not* accompanied by extra-linguistic signals. I shall address such problems below in my discussion of the effects on the listener of inadequate or confusing signals.

[10]On 'semantic content', see Lyons 1977, 47-8.

[11]For a brief discussion of non-verbal messages, see Fry 1963, 139 and Raskin 1985, 141.

[12]For example, Wilson 1979, 2, explicitly states his intention of using 'joke' and 'humour' as synonyms, an identification which many humour-researchers make without comment. Suls 1983, 48, criticizes this tendency in humour research.

such as relief, tickling, social awkwardness, intense joy, fear or grief. It would be just as wrong to claim that laughter and humour appreciation are co-extensive phenomena as it would be to claim that there exists no overlap at all between the two.[13]

Funny: essentially, a listener perceives a thing to be funny if (i) he views it as being humorous, and (ii) it causes him to laugh. A listener might extend the definition of 'funny' to a text or an event if he recognizes its potential to cause him or even someone else to laugh. The word **amusing** is used in a similar way.

Humorous and **Humour**: compared to 'funny', the terms 'humorous' and 'humour' have the advantage of covering areas such as wit and satire which might not always be describable as funny (i.e. causing laughter), but are nonetheless recognizable as something other than serious discourse.[14] On repeated telling, for example, a joke might cease to be 'funny' for a listener, but can still be described as 'humorous'. That is to say, the ascription to a text of the label 'funny' is far more variable than the ascription of the label 'humorous'.[15]

Joke: one way in which the word 'joke' is used is to describe a piece of text, whose form is often that of a story or puzzle, which a speaker might relate

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[13]Many researchers tacitly concur that humour and laughter are facets of the same phenomenon, notable exceptions being Lafrance 1983, who challenges the direct link between humour and laughter, and Morreall 1983, whose explicit project is to identify the link between all those situations in which laughter is wont to occur.

[14]I am aware that the term 'serious' is not ideal, but shall continue to use it *faute de mieux*. It has the advantage of being sanctioned by use - it is the favoured term of most humour theorists and is used colloquially in a similar way to how I shall use it. The disadvantage of 'serious' is that it has such a broad range of meanings. Besides 'non-humorous' it is used, *inter alia*, to signify 'heartfelt', 'weighty', 'important' and 'solemn', not all of which attributes characterize serious-mode discourse all of the time. Of greater concern is the false implication that humorous-mode discourse is *never* 'heartfelt', 'weighty' or 'important'. A related problem is that humour and seriousness are generally spoken of as opposites, an idea from which I distance myself in this chapter, as will be seen. All this said, the alternatives I have considered - 'straight', 'sober', 'neutral', 'standard' - are neither unambiguous nor do they any more clearly describe the phenomenon at hand.

[15]It is of interest to note that humour is a somewhat 'formal' word - one is less likely to remark in conversation, 'that was humorous' than 'that was funny'.

independent of context and with the aim of eliciting laughter in his listeners. This text is often formulaic and usually has one or more 'punch lines' through which the humour is realized.[16] In the literature, jokes, as I have defined them, are sometimes referred to as '**canned jokes**' and are examples of **non-spontaneous humour**.[17] The term **spontaneous humour** or **situation joke** is reserved for humour which occurs within conversation.[18] There is no precise divide between spontaneous and non-spontaneous humour, as, on the one hand, canned jokes are often used, in one form or another, in conversation, and on the other, it is open to a speaker to improve orally delivered canned jokes with spontaneous humour.[19]

Disjunctor and **Connector/Locus**: verbal jokes (in the sense of 'joke' given above) usually contain what is referred to in the literature as a **disjunctor** and a **connector**.[20] A simple joke may contain a word with two meanings: a primary meaning which the speaker's text presents as the more obvious, but which is eventually discarded by the listener in favour of the secondary meaning. An example of such a joke is the following humorous remark attributed to W. C. Fields, in which two meanings of the word 'club' are exploited:

> "Do you believe in clubs for young people?"
> "Only when kindness fails."

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[16]Rosten 1985, 1, defines a joke thus: 'a very short short story, carefully structured, a very brief narrative designed to reach a comedic climax through skillful cues, deliberate miscues, and sudden surprise.' Attardo and Chabanne 1992b, 169, comment, 'jokes are very short narrative fictions reduced to the most economical form. The narratives are most generally focused on a short dialogue (often not more than two lines) between rarely more than two characters (never more than four). The essential pattern is that the verbal joke is oriented to and by a punch line to build upon, or rather be incongruous with.' On punch lines, see Hetzran 1992.

[17]Fry 1963 appears to be the originator of the terms 'canned joke' and 'situation joke'. He differentiates between them thus (43): 'Canned jokes are defined as those which are *presented* with little obvious relation to the ongoing human interaction. Situation jokes are indicated as those which are *spontaneous* and have, to a major extent, their origin in the ongoing interpersonal (or intrapersonal) process.' Mulkay 1988, 8, refers to what I am here calling 'jokes' as 'standardized jokes'.

[18]'Situation joke' is the term used by Fry 1963, 43 and passim.

[19]Attardo and Chabanne 1992b present a wider definition of 'joke' than is offered here, which even includes cartoons.

[20]See Attardo 1988, 96-9.

In this joke, the word 'club' is the **connector**, as it represents the connection between the two possible semantic interpretations of the first speaker's question. To make sense of Field's reply, the listener must supplement the primary meaning club[1] = 'society' with the secondary meaning club[2] = 'bludgeon'. The **disjunctor**, on the other hand, is 'when kindness fails', the disjunctor being the phrase which forces the listener to re-evaluate the initial utterance. In so doing, the listener both recognizes the ambiguity of the form 'club' and reinterprets the sentence with reference to club[2].

Thus, in a joke centred around the meaning of an ambiguous word or phrase, the word or phrase itself is referred to as the **connector**, whereas the **disjunctor** is the word or phrase which makes the listener switch from one meaning of the connector to another. Often, the connector and disjunctor are united, as in the following joke:

> Have you heard about the new corduroy pillows?
> They're making headlines.

The word 'headlines' is the connector, since it is the double meaning of this word upon which the joke focuses. 'Headlines' is also the word which highlights the use of ambiguity in the text, and so the word which precipitates the switch of meaning. In the literature, the connector is also referred to as the **locus** of the joke.[21]

The Perception of Humour

Many modern humour-researchers centre their research around jokes,[22] because they tend not to be situation-specific in the same way as is true of spontaneous humour or humour occurring in literature or drama. Because of this, jokes present the researcher with fewer variables to assimilate in providing a definition of humour. I wish to espouse a more comprehensive approach to understanding humour, which deals with humour in all the forms in which it occurs. The aim will be to develop a model to explain how a listener categorizes all relevant texts, not just jokes. In consequence, I shall

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[21]The term 'locus' originates with Nash 1985, 7.

[22]This is a general (and especially North American) trend, notable exceptions being provided by Schmidt 1976 and Mulkay 1988.

attempt to be as catholic as possible in my choice of examples, using a variety of genres and sources.[23]

My initial premise is that humour can be defined at a pre-theoretical level by appealing to an individual's recognition of texts which he would classify as being humorous (i.e. **denotata** of humorous texts). Most individuals are able to say intuitively whether or not they think a text is humorous without reference to any theoretical evaluation of humour.[24] What is more, it is always possible that a group of individuals would not class the same texts as humorous and non-humorous, and in addition that a given individual's judgement might change over time or according to circumstance.[25] Below, I shall give examples of texts that I would personally classify as 'humorous'. Having thus outlined an **extensional** definition of humour, my goal will then be to provide a (non-arbitrary) **intensional** definition of humour.

My approach differs in a fundamental way from that of other humour researchers in that I am neither trying to provide a definition of humour which explains how it is created, nor am I adopting an essentialist approach, assuming that a text is humorous in itself, regardless of the context in which it is uttered.[26] For this reason I am obliged, for the purposes of discussion, to take a seemingly arbitrary decision over which examples of text are to be classified as humorous for the purpose of an extensional definition. Subsequently, in providing an intensional definition of humour, I shall

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[23]In the introductory abstract of their joint article, Attardo and Raskin 1991, 293, claim that jokes are, 'verbal humor['s]...most representative subset', a claim for which neither they, nor any other scholar of the Raskin-Attardo school, offer much by way of argument or evidence. Moreall highlights the preoccupation with jokes as a possible weakness of Attardo and Raskin's 'General Theory of Verbal Humor': for the former's criticisms, see Attardo and Raskin 1991, 333-4, where the authors also offer a brief defence of their stance. Attardo and Chabanne 1992b, 172, comment, 'jokes are interesting material for researchers insofar as they are at the same time complex, concise, and complete ("closed") texts.' See also ib. 1992a, 2-4.

[24]Berlyne 1972, 44, stresses this point at length.

[25]Factors such as tiredness and level of alcohol consumption, for example, can affect such a judgement. In this capacity, Nerhardt 1976, 55, talks of 'several facilitating and inhibiting variables: emotional, motivational and cognitive states'.

[26]Attardo and Raskin 1991, 330, state plainly that their General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), 'is a general and essentialist theory of verbal humor in the sense that it addresses the "what" question, that is "what is humor?" It does not address a number of other questions'.

attempt to describe the process by which a listener decides whether that text is humorous or not. My conclusions are offered as an alternative to those of other humour-researchers and do not attempt in themselves either to challenge or support the linguistic theories put forward by scholars such as Raskin and Attardo.[27]

An Extensional Definition of Humour

The following pieces of text represent items which I would personally include in an **extensional** definition of humour. Through these examples, I also hope to clarify my definitions of 'joke' and 'funny'.

The following extract is taken from Voltaire's *Candide*. The passage concerns the philosophy of Candide's teacher and mentor, Dr. Pangloss:[28]

(a) 'It is proved,' he used to say, 'that things cannot be other than they are, for since everything was made for a purpose, it follows that everything was made for the best purpose. Observe: our noses were made to carry spectacles, so we have spectacles. Legs were clearly intended for breeches, and we wear them. Stones were meant for carving and for building houses, and that is why my lord has a most beautiful house.... And since pigs were made to be eaten, we eat pork all the year round. It follows that those who maintain that all is right talk nonsense; they ought to say that all is for the best.'

Yamaguchi cites this joke:[29]

(b) A pair of suburban couples who had known each other for quite some time talked it over and decided to do a little conjugal swapping. The trade was made the following evening, and the newly arranged couples retired to their respective houses. After about an hour of bedroom bliss, one of the wives propped herself

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[27]No doubt Attardo himself would think little of what is offered in this chapter since he states that all non-essentialist theories of humour are (1994, 207), 'either partial elaborations or intuitions of a direction of research, and their analyses and proposals are little more than anecdotal.'

[28]Voltaire 1947, 20.

[29]Yamaguchi 1988, quoted by Dolitsky 1992, 41.

up on her elbow, looked at her new partner and said, 'Well, I wonder how the boys are getting along'.

The following example of unintended humour is quoted by Sherzer:[30]

(c) (Woman poet, at a poetry festival, giving a lecture on women and poetry): There are some things that only happen to women. Period.

Here is an old joke:

(d) Some time ago, the cats of Britain and France became very fond of swimming. The length and breadth of both countries, cats took part in swimming competitions and swimming galas, and naturally enough, a rivalry grew up between the two countries, each claiming to count the better swimmers amongst its inhabitants. To decide a question of much honour, it was agreed that each country would choose its best swimmer and that there would be a swim-off between the two national champions. It was arranged that the contest would be an ambitious cross-Channel swim. Early in the morning the two feline competitors set off from their respective countries, the British cat counting his strokes, miaowing, 'one, two, three, one, two, three...'. Similarly, the French cat set off, counting 'un, deux, trois, un, deux, trois...'. Well, which cat do you think won? The British cat, of course, because the un, deux, trois cat sank.

The next item is an excerpt from Act Three of Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*:

(e) Cecily: Do you suggest, Miss Fairfax, that I entrapped Ernest into an engagement? How dare you? This is not time for wearing the shallow mask of manners. When I see a spade I call it a spade.

Gwendolen: I am glad to say that I have never seen a spade. It is obvious that our social spheres have been widely different.

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[30]Sherzer 1978, 343.

The following is an extract from Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (1729), in which he satirically advocates that the solution to the gross poverty in Ireland at the hands of the British is that Irish babies be sold for food:[31]

(f) I shall now...humbly propose my own Thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least Objection.

> I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy Child well nursed is at a year Old a most delicious nourishing and wholesome Food, whether Stewed, Roasted, Baked or Boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a Fricasie, or a Ragoust.

The final item is a lavatory graffito - a rhetorical question followed by a response in another hand:

(g) A: Who gives a fuck?
B: Your mum.

In respect of my above attempt to clarify various terms, I would expect readers to class all the above items as examples of humour, but only two of the texts as jokes (the 'Partner swapping' and 'Swimming cats' jokes). Each individual reader would, I expect, class different items as funny or as having caused laughter.

The above items are intended as an indication of the range of subject matter that I would personally include in a tentative **extensional** definition of humour, and which I shall try to account for, and in some cases re-use, in an **intensional** definition of humour.

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Unitary Discourse

One of the more important terms to define for the purposes of the present discussion is **unitary discourse**, a term which I have borrowed from Mulkay,[32] but which I mean to define more precisely than Mulkay does.

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[31]Swift, *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents or Country*, in Swift 1932.

[32]Mulkay 1988, by whom it is used as a synonym for serious discourse.

Unitary discourse is communication which is non-ambiguous and self-consistent. Whilst it is theoretically possible for ideal unitary discourse to occur (that is discourse in which no ambiguity or inconsistency can be identified), human communication seldom, if ever, achieves this standard. Unitary discourse is, then, better defined in practice as discourse which the participants in any given dialogue perceive as sufficiently non-ambiguous and self-consistent to allow effective communication.

For the purposes of the present inquiry, I shall define unitary discourse as text which does not abuse its frame and which adheres to a revised version of Grice's maxims of speech. Frame abuse and Grice's maxims of speech are terms which I explain below.

Unitary Discourse as Frame Maintenance

The most thorough exponent of the concept of **frames** is Goffman in his 1974 book, *Frame Analysis*. Goffman's own rather elliptical explanation of a frame is as follows:[33]

> I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events - at least social ones - and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify.

A frame then, in its most basic form, is like a simple computer program which deals with a specific type of social situation.[34] For example, a 'Buying a train ticket' frame might involve questions such as 'How much does the ticket cost?', 'When does the train leave?', 'From what platform does the train leave?', for which the ticket buyer might well be expected to require answers. Similarly, the buyer might expect the ticket seller to utter numbers relating to the ticket purchase, these numbers indicating prices, times or platform numbers. Other locutions might also be exchanged, such as pleasantries, news of train cancellations or a request to sign a credit card slip.

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[33]Goffman 1974, 11.

[34]Deckers and Buttram 1990 use the term 'schema' instead of 'frame'. They suggest (53) that a 'schema represents stereotypical concepts of objects, situations, and behaviour sequences', and assimilate schemata to Raskin's 'scripts' (54), cf. Attardo 1994, 199-200. On 'schemata' see also Suls 1972, 85-6.

Each frame is a generalized context of experience which we subconsciously organize by a system of unwritten rules. That we unknowingly recognize the existence of frames may be exemplified by the structure of a foreign phrase book. Such a book would, for example, draw on the conventions of a frame such as that discussed above in an attempt to select the phrases and stereotypical linguistic sequences most likely to be required by the traveller abroad, in this case, to help him in purchasing a rail ticket. There are, as well, topics which the ticket buyer would not expect to be covered in an exchange with a ticket clerk. The buyer would probably be surprised if the clerk began talking to him about aubergine farming in Malaysia or the rights and wrongs of corporal punishment.

When a frame is entered it is often signalled. Such signals may be linguistic, paralinguistic, prosodic or any combination of the three. In the above example the frame is determined largely through external context, i.e. the physical location of the ticket booth within a railway station and its labelling ('Tickets'). Both participants' awareness of the ticket clerk's location and dress also render it obvious to the interlocutors that the clerk's rôle is to sell tickets. Hence, the 'Buying a train ticket' frame is easily entered. With similar ease, two guests at a party might enter the frame 'Getting to know someone', for example through an utterance such as 'We haven't been introduced', a statement which, in a different situation, or between a different set of interlocutors, might be construed differently or be wholly inappropriate.

In maintaining unitary discourse, a speaker usually signals entry into a frame and whilst in each frame, adheres to its unwritten rules as he intuits them. Movement between frames can often occur with next to no signalling: no doubt less signalling is needed the more compatible two frames are. For instance, the frame 'Asking whether a seat in a train is free' is fairly compatible with the frame 'Striking up a conversation with a fellow passenger', and would require little signalling. On the other hand, the frame 'Asking whether a seat in a train is free' is less compatible with the frame 'Buying bread'. Again, if on sitting next to you on a train a stranger begins to talk to you about the weather, you are less likely to mark it as an unusual event than if that same man asks you how much your baps cost.

One detail to be noted is that a number of frames may be nested inside one another at any given point in time, that is during what Goffman calls a 'strip of activity'. For instance, an individual might spend an evening within

the 'Dining in a restaurant' frame, but within this frame, he might still enter frames such as 'Ordering wine', 'Eating dessert' or 'Talking about politics'. It might be noted that there are no *a pr(o)ri* rules about how specific or general a frame can be.

The term frame abuse is now explicable in the context of the foregoing discussion. A frame is abused either when its unwritten rules are broken or when a new, non-compatible frame is entered without appropriate signal.

Unitary Discourse as Compliance with Maxims of Speech

In his 1975 article 'Logic and Conversation',[35] Grice notes that what he calls 'talk exchanges' (i.e. conversations) are co-operative efforts:[36] that is, rather than allow a conversation to disintegrate into a set of random, unconnected remarks, each participant tacitly pays heed to what Grice calls the **co-operative principle**, which he sums up in the form of the following exhortation:[37]

> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

Grice expands on this principle by detailing more specific **maxims** by which, he posits, a speaker is orientated in his production of a text. These fall under four headings, namely: quantity, quality, relation and manner. The four maxims may be summarized thus:[38]

> Quantity:
> 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
> 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

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[35]Grice 1975.

[36]On this concept, see also Liu 1995, esp. 177-8.

[37]Grice 1975, 45. One notes that with its appeal to the concept of the 'accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange' Grice's dictum runs the risk of circularity. In his expansion on this idea (see below) his sense is sufficiently clear as to cause few practical problems.

[38]A summary of ibid. 45-6. Note that the scheme reflects Grice's inconsistent use of 'maxims' and 'sub-maxims'.

Quality: 'Try to make your contribution one that is true'.
1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation: 'Be relevant'.

Manner: 'Be perspicuous'.
1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

I shall make some minor adjustments to Grice's maxims before using them in the construction of a model of humour perception. First, like Grice himself, I have reservations about the inclusion of the maxim, 'Do not make your contribution more informative than is required'. Of this maxim Grice states: 'it might be said that to be overinformative is not a transgression of the CP [Co-operative Principle] but merely a waste of time'.[39] He adds that, in any case, this maxim is subsumed under the maxim concerning relevance, an argument I would also use against the inclusion of the maxim 'be brief'. Certainly the inclusion of these two maxims is unnecessary (and even unhelpful) for the definition of humour which I offer below, and in consequence they do not appear in the revised version of Grice's maxims given towards the end of this section.

Another modification I shall make to Grice's model is to the maxims concerning the 'Quality' of the text. Grice asserts that the quality is affected by the truth value of the text: he supposes that there is an onus on the speaker to say neither what he believes to be false nor that for which he lacks adequate evidence. The present study focuses on the listener's perception of text, and I do not believe that the *truth value* of a given statement necessarily affects the listener's assessment of it. I believe instead that the listener will assess text according to its *plausibility*.

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[39]Ibid., 46.

In summary, I believe that the listener will judge unitary discourse to be occurring if he considers the speaker to be adhering to the following rules, which comprise a revision of Grice's model:[40]

1. Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

2. Quality:
a. Do not say what you believe to be implausible.
b. Do not say that for which you clearly lack adequate evidence.

3. Relation: Be relevant.

4. Manner:
a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
b. Avoid ambiguity.
c. Be orderly.

It should be added that adherence to these maxims is, to an extent, frame-dependent, and that they may be **stretched**, without, in Grice's terminology, being '**violated**',[41] depending on the frame in question.[42] For example, a religious or mystical text might be expected by the listener to present a certain openness of reference. In such a context, then, the listener's tolerance of various kinds of ambiguity is raised, and on reading such a text containing words or phrases with double or multiple meanings, he does not necessarily consider maxim (4b) to have been violated.

Other ways in which maxims may be considered 'stretched', but not 'violated', are explored in the following section.

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[40]In anticipation of my conclusions, Morreall 1983, 79-82, systematically lists ways in which non-adherence to these maxims can result in humour. He states (82), 'the violation of any of these principles has humorous possibilities'. Note that the rules have been renumbered for ease of reference.

[41]Ibid., 49.

[42]Grice's notions of 'flouting' and 'exploiting' maxims have been avoided, since, as far as humour perception is concerned, these concepts serve to cloud rather than clarify the issue. Grice is concerned with what he calls 'conversational implicature' (i.e. what a speaker is implying rather than stating in an utterance), of which humorous discourse could be considered a subset, although, perhaps surprisingly, he fails to mention this fact.

The Listener's Rôle in Maintaining Unitary Discourse

As I have stated, unitary discourse does not always live up to a theoretical ideal, and (as if in recognition of this phenomenon) the listener, whilst not having thoroughly understood what has been said, often simply accepts that the speech of the speaker is indeed unitary discourse - that is he gives the speaker the benefit of the doubt.[43] In this situation, the listener may perceive Grice's maxims as having been stretched, but not 'violated'. Such minor communications breakdowns can have a number of causes, the following being amongst the more common:

(i) Use of a foreign or unknown word: the listener glosses over this word in order to maintain a perception of the text as unitary discourse.

(ii) Ambiguity: the use of an ambiguous word or phrase will be overlooked. The listener does not find the speaker's text entirely clear, but he will attempt to understand it as unitary discourse.[44]

(iii) Inconsistency: a similar process is applied. Minor inconsistencies are disregarded by the listener to maintain the expectation of unitary discourse and the flow of the conversation.

(iv) Total failure to understand: if the listener is confronted with a text which he expects to be non-ambiguous and self-consistent, but which, through its technical nature, is incomprehensible, the listener will take it to lie within the realm of unitary discourse.

This list is given as a sample of ways in which Grice's maxims might be stretched, and is by no means exhaustive.[45]

To summarize, the position offered in this section is as follows. In the absence of signals from the speaker suggesting he should act otherwise, the listener will tend to give the speaker the benefit of the doubt: that is, he takes

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[43]See Clark and Clark 1977, 72-3, and Liu 1995, esp. 178 and 181.

[44]See Goldstein 1990, many of whose examples might be thought of as belonging to this category, had the author not brought their humorous potential to the reader's attention.

[45]See further Wilson 1979, 162 (plus references *ad loc.*).

unitary discourse as the text's norm unless or until he is forced to reinterpret. An exception to this rule would be when the listener has his own reasons for interpreting the text as something other than unitary discourse. If, for example, he is in a playful or argumentative state of mind, or if clarity and precision are essential, he may choose, say, to draw attention to ambiguities in the text.

Frame Maintenance and Adherence to the Maxims of Speech

At this point, let us briefly clarify the relationship between frame maintenance and adherence to the maxims of speech. The two are not to be considered mutually exclusive entities, but rather may be understood in terms of one another. The implicit exhortation to an interlocutor to maintain frame, for example, may be considered as subsumed by maxim (3), 'be relevant', and similarly, adherence to the maxims of speech may be thought of as subsumed by the consideration of frame maintenance: that is, part of maintaining frame is having regard for the maxims. Whilst it will remain convenient at different times to talk of a speaker either as having abused a frame or as having violated the maxims of speech, the interrelationship of the two must be borne in mind.

Mulkay on Unitary Discourse

Unitary discourse is, then, to be understood as text which does not abuse its frame and which complies with my revision of Grice's maxims of speech. As noted above, 'unitary discourse' is a term borrowed from Mulkay, whose premise is that it is identical to serious-mode discourse.[46] As will become apparent, I believe the identification of unitary discourse with serious-mode discourse to be unhelpful, and I shall suggest a process of discourse classification which, although based on a binary system of classifying text as either unitary-mode or non-unitary-mode discourse, allows for a more complex classification of text than as simply *either* serious- *or* humorous-mode discourse.

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[46]On the difficulties connected with the term 'serious', see note 13 below.

Humour

Humour is perceived by a listener in the following circumstances:

> When the speaker, whilst being perceived by the listener at that moment in time as being *capable* of maintaining unitary discourse, is perceived by the listener (who might be the speaker himself) as having *failed to maintain* unitary discourse.[47]

Nonsense

Much of what has been said hitherto is in accordance with Mulkay's view of verbal communication as falling into one or the other of two modes: unitary- or serious-mode discourse on the one hand, and non-unitary- or humorous-mode discourse on the other. I believe that Mulkay's model is incomplete, and that the listener's perception of the speaker's *capability* for the production of unitary discourse is central to establishing a complete model.

> If, for example, a listener is confronted with a speaker whose discourse consists of non sequiturs, he has, as far as classification of the discourse is concerned, one of two options:
>
> (i) to perceive the speaker as capable of unitary discourse, but as not producing unitary discourse and therefore to classify the text as humour.

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[47]I realize that we may distinguish between a speaker being capable of unitary mode discourse at a given moment in time from his being capable in general. Should the speaker be emotional, tired or cornered in an argument, he may lose his ability to produce unitary discourse, albeit only temporarily. When I later talk of a speaker being 'incapable' of producing unitary discourse, I mean to imply only that this inability is temporary (it may or may not also be general). There are, no doubt, similarities between my definition of humour and Eco's 1986, 272, observation that, 'there exists a rhetorical device, which concerns the figures of thought, in which, given a social or intertextual "frame" or scenario already known to the audience, you display the variation, without, however, making it explicit in discourse.'

(ii) to perceive the speaker's lack of unitary discourse as a sign of his inability to produce unitary discourse.[48] The text is no longer classed as humour, but rather as **nonsense**.[49]

These conclusions can be expressed in the following diagram:

	Speaker perceived as maintaining unitary discourse	Speaker perceived as not maintaining unitary discourse
Speaker perceived as capable of unitary discourse	**Seriousness**	**Humour**
Speaker perceived as incapable of unitary discourse		**Nonsense**

Figure 1: Grid of classification of texts (incomplete).

Paradox

Filling in the fourth box of the above of the above diagram may at first appear unfeasible, since it might be thought that no speaker who is perceived as incapable of unitary discourse can also be perceived as maintaining it. I do, however, believe that this is not the case, and label this fourth box **paradox**. It has been taken as axiomatic in the course of this discussion that any one speaker's continued text can switch from any one of the four modes to any other according to the content of the text and the listener's consequent perception of it. Should a speaker be asleep, for example, he may cease to be rated by the listener as capable of unitary discourse: if the sleeping speaker nevertheless makes a unitary mode utterance, then this text is rated as **paradoxical**. In this example, the individual piece of text with which the speaker communicates is in a mode that the listener recognizes as unitary

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[48]Again, this inability may be temporary or general (see previous note). I am forced to admit that, where colloquially we might speak of someone deliberately 'talking nonsense', as far as my model is concerned, it is not possible for a speaker *wilfully* to produce nonsense-mode discourse.

[49]Schultz 1976, 13, distinguishes humour and nonsense differently by calling nonsense 'pure or unresolvable incongruity' and humour 'resolvable or meaningful incongruity'.

discourse, but nevertheless, the speaker's inability, as far as the listener perceives, to sustain unitary discourse requires the listener to rate the speaker's text as belonging to this category.

A brief note concerning nomenclature. The name 'paradox' has been chosen for this mode because no single English word serves better to designate the phenomenon at hand.[50] One recognized sense of 'paradox' is: 'a proposition or statement that is actually self-contradictory to reason or ascertained truth, and so, essentially absurd and false',[51] and it is to this sense that I am appealing in naming this mode. As may be ascertained from the diagram, in terms of the model of text classification **paradox** is to be understood as being perceived by a listener in the following circumstances:

> When the speaker, whilst being perceived by the listener as being incapable of unitary discourse - at least temporarily - is nevertheless perceived by the listener as having maintained unitary discourse.

No doubt 'paradox' is the mode least commonly entered and most difficult to grasp, the lack of an ideally suitable English word to designate the phenomenon being both a symptom and cause of this. Examples of text which might be classified as paradoxical include seemingly meaningful utterances made by small children, non-English speakers, the *idiot savant* or the mad, or utterances which contain far more subtlety of meaning than the speaker is perceived capable of. I shall cite two personal anecdotes as examples. First, when my brother was a toddler, he asked my mother to read out to him some writing on a tin. When my father was alone with him later in the day, my brother pointed at the tin and repeated what he had heard earlier, at which point my father was under the illusion that his son had taught himself to read. My father had made the mistake of categorizing my brother's text as serious, when in fact this instance of childhood echolalia should have been rated as paradoxical. Second, a foreign acquaintance said of a friend of mine recently that 'he could be funny', meaning 'he can be [i.e. often is] funny'. In the mouth of a native speaker this comment might have been considered to be a subtle put-down (i.e. he could be funny if only he

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[50]I am aware that naming this mode 'paradox' may cause some confusion, since the word has a number of meanings in English. As is no doubt apparent, I am to some extent suggesting an additional meaning for the word.

[51]OED s.v. 2b.

tried), but under the circumstances the utterance is more appropriately categorized as belonging to the paradoxical mode.

What becomes apparent from these two anecdotes, no doubt, is that the line between paradox and other modes is often fine. In the case of these two texts, for example, circumstances are imaginable under which either utterance could be rated as humorous. An alternative categorization could be made by regarding the respective speakers as being capable of maintaining an appropriate frame, but as having failed to do so: the conditions for humour are thus met. My brother could be regarded as having failed to maintain frames associated with being a baby, and my acquaintance as having failed to maintain those involved with being a foreigner. That texts can be categorized in more than one mode at once is an aspect of my model which is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Examples of text which could potentially be rated in any of the four modes, including that of paradox, may be illustrated from an excerpt from Max Frisch's *Biedermann und die Brandstifter* (*The Fire Raisers*). Biedermann, the central figure of Frisch's 1958 play, is a character much of whose discourse is difficult to categorize in terms of my model. In the play, the town where Biedermann lives is subject to an ever-increasing number of arson attacks. As time passes, he lets stay in his house one man, then another, who we have every reason to believe are responsible for the attacks. Rather than admit his fears, Biedermann goes to extraordinary lengths to assure his guests (and himself) that he harbours no suspicions about them, to the extent of giving them the matches with which they burn down his house. In the course of the play we come to doubt Biedermann's capacity for reasoning, and in terms of the model, we could rate his discourse as paradoxical in the following circumstances: (i) if, as listeners, we doubt his capability to adhere to maxim (2a) 'Do not say what you believe to be implausible', and (ii) if we also believe that Biedermann's individual sentences all adhere to Grice's maxims of speech. If these conditions are met, then Biedermann's discourse is to be regarded as paradoxical.

The exchange below takes place towards the end of the play when, during dinner in the house, both Biedermann's wife and maid are temporarily out of the room, leaving him alone with his two house guests, Schmitz and Eisenring.[52]

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[52]Text from Frisch 1992, 62, trans. by Michael Bullock.

Biedermann — Between ourselves, gentlemen, enough is enough. My wife has a weak heart. Let's have no more joking about arson.

Schmitz — We're not joking, Herr Biedermann.

Eisenring — We're fire raisers.

Biedermann — Gentleman, quite seriously now -

Schmitz — Quite seriously.

Eisenring — Quite seriously.

Schmitz — Why won't you believe us?

Eisenring — Your house, Herr Biedermann, is very favourably situated, you must admit that: five ignition points like this round the gas-holders, which are unfortunately guarded, and a good south wind blowing -

Biedermann — It isn't true.

Schmitz — Herr Biedermann, if you think we're fire raisers, why not say so straight out?

Biedermann looks like a whipped dog.

Biedermann — I don't think you're fire raisers, gentlemen, it isn't true, you're being unfair to me, I don't think you're - fire raisers...

Eisenring — Cross your heart!

Biedermann — No! No, no! No.

Schmitz — Then what do you think we are?

Biedermann — My friends...

As stated above, certain parts of Biedermann's text could undoubtedly be categorized in any of the four modes depending on whether a listener regards Grice's maxims as having been either stretched or violated, and whether he regards Biedermann as capable or incapable of unitary discourse.

In the light of the discussion in this section, the fourth box will be labelled paradox. Below is a revised version of the grid with this mode included.

	Speaker perceived as maintaining unitary discourse	Speaker perceived as not maintaining unitary discourse
Speaker perceived as capable of unitary discourse	**Seriousness**	**Humour**
Speaker perceived as incapable of unitary discourse	**Paradox**	**Nonsense**

Figure 2: Grid of classification of texts (complete).

The Grid

There are a number of observations to make about the above grid. While for any one listener the vast majority of texts fit into one mode and one mode only, there will exist a number of texts which the listener will initially categorize in one mode but retrospectively recategorize in another. For instance, it is a familiar phenomenon that a conversation eventually interpreted as humorous is initially perceived as lying in the serious mode. Texts can be retrospectively recategorized into other modes, too. An example of a text initially taken by a listener as serious-mode, but later recategorized as paradoxical-mode, is contained in the following newspaper report:

> 'Help me, help me, please help me,' cried a voice from the basement of a North Side school.
>
> 'Come to the door,' called policeman William Diaz, who had been summoned to the scene by worried residents. 'Nobody will hurt you, you're safe.'
>
> Nobody came. Diaz broke the door down. There sat a Myna bird, pet of a school janitor.
>
> Diaz said the bird was unhappy at being found out. When it saw Diaz, the bird switched tactics and began berating the policeman in shrill four-letter words.
>
> (*The Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), 22/6/70)

Text (g), a lavatory graffito, also contains an utterance which we initially classed in one mode (the serious mode) but which we are forced to recategorize (this time in the humorous mode):

A: Who gives a fuck?
B: Your mum.

B's comment, scrawled underneath A's text, highlights an ambiguity in the text - namely that of the phrase 'to give a fuck'. This recategorization is able to take place because Writer B's riposte has highlighted a way in which Writer A can be regarded as having violated maxim (4b), 'avoid ambiguity'.

In a similar vein, a text may be categorized in different modes by different listeners. Consider the following conversation recorded by Joe Orton in his diaries. By the participants the conversation was no doubt judged as lying in the serious mode, whereas Orton relates it as an instance of humour:[53]

> On the way home a man behind me on the bus sat next to a young woman and said, 'It's sevenpence to where I'm going, my dear. I remember when it was twopence.' 'Do you really?' she said, looking most unimpressed. 'You don't mind my speaking to you without your permission do you?' The man seemed extremely nervous. 'No,' the girl said. 'I usually travel by underground. I'm a railway official. We travel free of charge. As I expect you've read.' Pause, and then, heavily, 'When I get in my four-footed friend will run to greet me.' He added, 'My dog' as though she might imagine he meant his donkey.

As discussed above, texts can also straddle the various categories. If, for example, a speaker inadvertently makes a risqué innuendo whilst engaging in discourse in the serious mode, the listener may note the text's potential for humour whilst simultaneously locating the text is in the serious mode for the purposes of the exchange in which he is engaged. The following excerpt, also by Orton, from *The Good and Faithful Servant*, is an example of ostensibly serious-mode text whose potential for humour will be noted by a

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[53]Orton 1986, 62: Friday 13 January, 1967. For Orton, one of the speakers (the man) has failed to maintain unitary discourse.

listener. In the scene in question, Mrs. Vealfoy, a personnel manager, is giving a prospective new employee, Ray, a lecture on sexual ethics:

> ...love-making should be kept for one's partner alone. Outside marriage the act may seem the same, but I have my doubts as to whether anyone derives any real and lasting satisfaction from it. There is no finer sight than two married people making love.

Any member of the audience may well recognize the last line's potential for humour, but since in the context of the scene the utterance is both delivered and reacted to as 'serious', the listener must also recognize its potential for seriousness if he is to maintain the dramatic illusion.

As previously stated, a listener responds not only to the linguistic elements of a text in the process of that text's classification but also to paralinguistic and prosodic signals. In addition to this, the text's frame is itself a form of signal to which the listener responds. The listener's classification of a text might differ depending on whether its frame were that, say, of a tragic drama, a news report, a wedding speech or an informal conversation. A specific effect of the perceived frame on the listener's classification of a text is discussed below.

'Playful' and 'Non-Playful' Text Frames

In his book *On Humour*, Mulkay argues that discourse can only be classified as 'serious' or as 'humorous'. He claims that within what he calls the humorous mode of discourse speakers are no longer required to keep their text self-consistent and free from ambiguity. I believe that in defining humorous-mode discourse in this way Mulkay has confused two ideas. I have already stated the circumstances under which I believe a listener perceives humour in a text, and I should like now to suggest that an explicit distinction should be made between 'humour' on the one hand, and text which is presented within a 'Playful' frame on the other.[54]

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[54]Many scholars have talked of 'cues', 'signals', a 'play frame', etc., but all fail to discuss the precise relation of these cues to humour. Typically, Powell, C. 1977, 54, talks of what he calls 'cues', commenting, 'information passed on by a series of signals, prepares or cues the audience for the "appropriate" response.' See also Fry 1963, 125; Berlyne 1972, 55-6; McGhee 1972, 74; Rothbart 1976, 51; Zillman 1983, 100; MacHovec 1988, 7 and Mulkay 1988, 47. Nash 1985, 48,

By text in a 'Playful' frame I mean discourse which the speaker accompanies with certain signals or rather, in terms of my model, discourse that the listener perceives as being accompanied by certain signals, these signals suggesting that humorous mode discourse is on its way.

As mentioned above, a number of frames may be nested inside one another at any given point in time. With this in mind, let us now look at how Mulkay's conception of the humorous mode is insufficient for establishing when a text is humorous or not. This is apparent if we scrutinize different versions of one of our earlier texts, namely (b). Here is version one:[55]

> A pair of suburban couples who had known each other for quite some time talked it over and decided to do a little conjugal swapping. The trade was made the following evening, and the newly arranged couples retired to their respective houses. After about an hour of bedroom bliss, one of the wives propped herself up on her elbow, looked at her new partner and said, 'Well, I wonder how the boys are getting along'.

This text might well be called 'humorous'. Its format is that of a joke. Observe how the text becomes transformed, however, once the punch line has disappeared (version two):

> A pair of suburban couples who had known each other for quite some time talked it over and decided to do a little conjugal swapping. The trade was made the following evening, and the newly arranged couples retired to their respective houses.

This truncated text might still intuitively be described as a joke - albeit an incomplete one - as it adheres to certain narrative expectations which a listener associates with the joke format: namely, it is a short narrative, it contains familiar ingredients in a familiar situation, and has a risqué tone.[56]

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comes closest to espousing my approach: he posits that such cues mean 'interpret what is being said as humorous discourse whether or not it is in joke form.'

[55]Yamaguchi 1988, quoted by Dolitsky 1992, 41.

[56]The possibility should be admitted that version two could, out of context, be mistaken for the beginning of a legal narrative, say: certainly without the punch line its frame is less clear.

This said, it would seem inappropriate to call the text 'humorous'. I believe it is more helpful to analyse the two texts as grounded within the frame 'Joke Telling', a frame which naturally enough is in turn nested in a 'Playful' frame. It is the joke's punch line (or more accurately, its disjunctor) which transforms the text into humour, and without it the humour may be anticipated but is not actually realized.[57]

As a consequence of this discussion I shall propose that, for each individual listener, some texts lie within a 'Playful' frame, whereas others lie within a 'Non-Playful' frame, or otherwise that their frames are indeterminable in this respect. The frame 'Joke Telling' generally, if not always, nests within a 'Playful' frame, whereas a frame such as 'Reprimanding a child' will generally be associated with a 'Non-Playful' frame. Many frames naturally tend towards playfulness or towards non-playfulness but nonetheless the speaker often has freedom over whether his framing of a particular text is 'Playful' or 'Non-Playful'.[58] As an example of this, observe the following dialogue where, in an office environment, the frame 'Obtaining file tags' is itself framed in a playful way, where a non-playful frame might be expected.[59]

There are three participants of roughly the same age: Mike (M) is a research assistant, while Sara (S) and Boo (B) are secretaries. Each utterance is coded 'U' and each gesture 'G'.

G1 The narrative begins when Mike enters the reception area, and walks to Boo's desk where he waits for her to notice him.
G2 Seeing Mike, Boo stops typing, and looks up at him inquisitively.
U1 M-B 'Do you have any of those stick-on tags for file folders?'
G3 Sara pauses in her typing and listens to the dialogue between Mike and Boo.

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[57]Mulkay's thinking (1988, 48-9) is similar to mine, but would, I feel, benefit from the terminological distinctions I make in this section.
[58]Mulkay 1988, 114-7, gives examples of conversational exchanges where speakers invite laughter from their interlocutors by means of 'within-speech laughter'. This could be regarded as one way of establishing a 'Playful' frame. Fine 1983, 166, observes, 'there are circumstances in which people expect to laugh and as a result almost anything will receive a laugh.'
[59]Mulkay, 47-8, quoted from Flaherty 1984, 78. I have made slight adjustments to the rather odd English of the original.

G4 Boo pulls open a drawer in her desk and brings out several small boxes.

U2 B-M 'Yes, and you have your choice from a wide variety of colors. There's yellow, purple, red, green...' (said archly).

G5 Mike and Sara grin.

U3 M-B 'I'll take the green; they go with my eyes.' (said mischievously).

G6 Boo and Sara chuckle as Mike grins.

G7 Boo hands Mike the green tags.

G8 Mike takes the package and strolls out of the room.

For the sake of comparison, let us examine the following conversational extract whose frame is not wholly clear for all participants, but which might be said to lie in a 'Joke Telling' frame. Unusually, however, the text is framed in such a way as to appear 'Non-Playful' (at least, that is, to all but two participants. The conversation took place between myself (J), my flat-mate (M), and a female visitor to the house (H) during an informal dinner party. Earlier in the evening my flat-mate had told several jokes revolving around a fictitious visit to a 'speciality meat restaurant', which were part of a series of jokes I had heard before.

[Pause in the conversation]

J: What else did you eat at that speciality meat restaurant? Didn't you have some swan?

M: Yeah, that's right.

H: Swan?

M: Yeah. The meat was really nice, you know. But the bill came as a shock.

[Pause]

H: What? Is swan meat really expensive, then?

[Laughter all round]

No doubt part of the reason the joke successfully caught our visitor out was her unfamiliarity with our 'Joke Telling' signals.

What I have termed discourse in a 'Playful' frame has a certain amount in common with Fry's 'play frame' and with what Raskin and his followers call 'non-bona fide communication'.[60] I have chosen this new (if similar)

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[60]Fry 1963, 125, 138-9 and 143. See also Strean 1993, 7.

piece of terminology, however, since there are important differences between what these older terms are used to designate and what I wish to designate in referring to discourse within a 'Playful' frame, the major difference being that 'non-bona fide communication' and discourse within a 'play frame' are often used merely as synonyms for 'humour' or for a humorous exchange.[61]

Two key differences between text in the humorous mode and text in a 'Playful' frame are, however, that:

(i) despite the expectation created for the listener by his perception of a 'Playful' frame around a text, humour does not *necessarily* materialize in the text. Such a frustrated expectation is exemplified by the abbreviated version of the 'Partner Swapping' joke above - a joke without a punch line. Similarly, we might recognize that whilst a stand-up comic's whole routine has a 'Playful' frame, we would not regard everything he says as lying in the humorous mode.

(ii) non-intentional humour, by its very nature, regularly occurs outside a 'Playful' frame. Instances of non-intentional humour occurring in a 'Non-Playful' frame include Orton's bus dialogue and Sherzer's example of the female poet, lecturing on women and poetry (text (c)), who says:[62]

> There are some things that only happen to women. Period.

As a conclusion, I suggest that there exists (i) serious-mode and humorous-mode discourse, as well as texts that lie within other modes, and (ii) text with a 'Playful' or a 'Non-Playful' frame. Whilst there might be a large degree of overlap between texts presented in a 'Playful' frame and humorous-mode discourse on the one hand, and texts presented in a 'Non-Playful' frame and serious-mode discourse on the other, these modes and frames are by no means co-extensive. With this distinction made, the special status that Mulkay claims for what he refers to as the humorous mode of discourse can instead be claimed for what we shall refer to a text lying within

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[61]Raskin's 1985, 100-4, and Zajdman's 1992 discussions of potential misunderstandings in communication would, no doubt, benefit from a distinction such as I have made between *de facto* humour on the one hand and discourse in a 'Playful' frame on the other.

[62]See n. 30 above.

a 'Playful' frame:[63] when speakers are producing text in this frame their discourse often contains more ambiguity, more implausibility and so on than would be the case if it were produced in a 'Non-Playful' frame.

Misunderstanding and Confusion of Frames

Raskin and Attardo base much of their theory of humour on text which is intentionally humorous on the part of the speaker and perceived as humorous on the part of the listener. It is, after all, in such an ideal context of mutual understanding and communicative co-operation between speaker and listener that an essentialist theory of humour, such as theirs, may be developed. There is, moreover, no doubt that a good deal of communication in real life does occur where the listener correctly perceives the speaker's intent to produce humorous mode text, such communication often being aided by the fact that the text has been successfully signalled as lying within a 'Playful' frame.[64]

Needless to say, text which a speaker intends to be perceived as humorous is not necessarily perceived by the listener as such. The reverse is also true: that is, the listener perceives the speaker as producing humorous-mode text when this is not the speaker's intention. One common reason for this communication breakdown is a misunderstanding of frame:[65] either the listener misunderstands the signals given by the speaker, or the speaker fails to provide adequate signals.[66] In terms of my model, the speaker produces text in, say, what he believes to be a 'Playful' frame, which the listener

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[63]That humorous-mode discourse has a special status is the central thesis of Mulkay's first two chapters of *On Humour*.

[64]Typical of the Raskin-Attardo school is Zhao 1988, who assumes at the beginning of her article (282), 'two arbitrary yet necessary conditions', namely, '(1) The joker comprehends what is contained in the text of the joke and utters the joke with conscious knowledge of the joking act; (2) The joke is successfully put across to and absorbed by the hearer to the effect that the listener feels amused or simply laughs.'

[65]Not that such a situation need always be classed as a 'breakdown': for example, a group of speakers might enjoy finding unintended humour in each other's discourse.

[66]McGhee 1972, 74, commenting on the importance of 'various external cues' in children's humorous exchanges, posits that, 'if these cues were eliminated...the discrepant stimulus events might arouse curiosity, surprise, anxiety, or simply confusion'. See also Berlyne 1972, 56 and Mulkay 1988, 46.

perceives as having been delivered in a 'Non-Playful' frame.[67] Such circumstances can lead to the listener feeling irritation towards the speaker at his production of what the listener may perceive to be nonsense-mode discourse. The speaker may also feel disappointment or annoyance that the listener has failed to perceive neither the intended humour nor the 'Playful' frame in which the text was delivered.[68]

A listener is more likely to identify text as lying in the humorous mode and/or a 'Playful' frame the more numerous and more familiar the speaker's signals are. When a listener fails to identify the humorous mode, it must be for one of the following reasons:

(i) he has no reason to think that the speaker has violated a maxim (and therefore categorizes the text as either serious or paradoxical);

(ii) he thinks the speaker may be stretching a maxim for effect (i.e. he is being deliberately mysterious, poetic, etc.);

(iii) he rates the text as lying in the nonsense mode;

(iv) he is puzzled by the text and unsure as to its categorization.

It is interesting to note at this point that certain psycho-physical conditions seem to be unconducive both to the production and perception of humorous mode discourse; for example, hunger, fatigue, stress or pain.[69] One should also note a category of utterance which shares a number of similarities with humorous mode discourse, namely when a speaker is being

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[67]On the need to agree signals and recognize each other's play: Fry 1963, 125.

[68]Garfinkel's 'Lodger Experiment' 1967, 47-9 - where students pretended to be lodgers in the parental home - is a good example of the various results that misunderstanding of framing can have: for analysis, see Powell, C. 1988. Zajdman 1992, esp. 359, talks of the 'misunderstandings' and perceived 'insults' which can occur when what is referred to here as a misunderstanding of *frame* or *mode* occurs.

[69]See Deckers and Avery 1994, 314-5, on what they call the 'paratelic' state, in which 'a person...enjoys engaging in behaviour for its own enjoyment.' Russell 1996, 45, states, 'it has long been recognized that a certain mood or frame of mind is a prerequisite to humour and laughter.' See also ibid. 48 and 54. Schmidt 1976 (cited and discussed by Attardo 1988 and 1994, 186) and Raskin 1985, 6, both provide lists of the potentially relevant contextual factors surrounding humour appreciation. See also Suls 1972, 88 and 1983, 43 and 47.

disruptive. He may be disruptive wilfully ('you're all a bunch of wankers') or not ('I'm going to be sick'). Signalling an emergency also falls into this category ('Your cat is on fire'). I suggest that the categorization of texts such as these is affected greatly by the perceived frame, 'Playful' of 'Non-Playful'.[70]

A note on a potential problem. My model may be thought incapable of accounting for the scenario whereby a listener rates as humorous the text of a speaker whom he is encountering for the first time: after all, a central part of such an assessment is judging the speaker capable of unitary discourse, a decision for which the listener has little data. The assessment of an unfamiliar speaker's text can, no doubt, cause difficulties - as listeners, we sometimes have to ask whether a speaker is 'kidding' or, alternatively, we reserve judgement on his text. However, a speaker will frequently be assumed capable of unitary discourse on the grounds that this is true of most human beings.[71] In addition to this, the frame is an important deciding factor: a listener will look to rate as humorous a piece of text which he perceives as lying in a 'Playful' frame and/or which has similarities with other humorous texts he has encountered before. The expectations aroused by framing entail, for example, that we are more likely to rate an off-the-wall comment as humorous if it is delivered by an unfamiliar stand-up comic than, say, by an unfamiliar bus-conductor. Unfamiliar written texts may well cause the reader additional problems in that they are accompanied neither by prosodic nor paralinguistic signals. How, for example, is a reader to react to a graffito? How is the reader to determine whether its author is capable of unitary discourse - a necessary prelude to his deciding whether or not the text is humorous? I suggest that a similar process of assessment occurs whereby the reader will generally assume the writer to be capable of unitary discourse

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[70]There is, to be sure, a fine line between disruptiveness and humour - indeed, I suggest below that humour is 'imagist' (Chapter 2, p.52). In being disruptive, however, the speaker does adhere to the maxims of speech and does, I would argue, accompany his entering of a new frame with paralinguistic signals different from those appropriate to humour. One fundamental difference between humour and disruptiveness of the type I have been describing is that humour is more readily judged as being ἄνευ ὀδύνης. Whilst the exact nature of the difference between these two phenomena is complex, it does not pose any practical problem when using the model to account for the humorous potential of texts, as we shall see.

[71]A process similar to the 'reality principle': see Clark and Clark 1977, 72-3, who state (72), 'according to the reality principle, listeners interpret sentences in the belief that the speaker is referring to a situation or set of ideas they can make sense of.'

unless given reason to think otherwise, and will look to classify as humorous such texts as share features with other humorous texts he has read before.[72]

Observable Phenomena

In this section, I should like briefly to identify some observable phenomena concerning humour which are compatible with the model of humour perception proposed in this chapter.

(i) Children are not born with a sense of the phenomenon of humour, but rather they acquire this sense.[73] Also, what is regarded as humorous differs greatly from culture to culture. According to my definition, there are various social and semantic judgements bound up with the listener's assessment of whether or not a text is humorous. Acquiring a sense of humour is therefore bound up with the process of an individual's acculturation.

(ii) Different people find different texts humorous. The assessment of whether or not a text is humorous rests with the listener (who might also be the speaker himself). The nature of this assessment often results in different listeners coming to different conclusions about whether or not a text is humorous.[74] It may be noted that essentialist theories of humour, since they are less flexible, are less sensitive to differences of opinion concerning text classification.

(iii) People who suffer from autism have little or no sense of the phenomenon of humour, especially verbal humour.[75] Characteristic of this condition is an inability to understand that other people have different

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[72]The formula I present here seems unexceptionable in practical terms, although I am aware that I may appear to introduce intentionalism by stealth. Naturally, this is not my purpose, since the problems of ascribing the meaning of a text to its author are notorious (see, for example, Silk 1974, 33, 59-63 and his appendix 'On the History of Intentionalism', 233-5 and Goldhill 1986, 283 and n.35).

[73]On the development of humour in children, see Rothbart 1973 and 1976; McGhee 1979, Chapter 2; Suls 1983, 45-6 and Morreall 1989, 16-7. Lefort 1992, 154-5, suggests that children internalize the structure of jokes between the ages of seven and ten.

[74]On this subject, see Powell, C. 1977, 54.

[75]Wing 1976, 115 and Cohen et al. 1987.

perceptions of the world.[76] A sufferer would therefore be precluded from making a judgement on the speaker's ability or inability to maintain unitary discourse.

(iv) Man is the only animal which has a sense of humour.[77] As Hazlitt comments, 'man is the only animal that laughs and weeps, for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are and what they ought to be.'[78]

Interaction Between Modes: The Absorption of Text into A Different Mode

We have established that discourse which the listener assesses as lying within the domain of one mode of discourse can subsequently be reassessed and perceived as lying within the domain of another mode. A related phenomenon is when certain incidents of repeated discourse are absorbed by the listener into a mode different from that in which he initially perceived them as lying. For example, instances of humour can, when used repeatedly, be absorbed by the listener into what he perceives as the serious mode of discourse. This phenomenon is analogous to that of a live metaphor becoming a dead metaphor. An example of the phenomenon is the assessment of the phrase 'cheap at half the price': this phrase could be assessed as being an instance of humour, but would often be considered as lying in the domain of serious-mode discourse.

Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline concisely the modal theory of text classification which promises to explicate the intuitive processes by which

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[76]See Wing 1976, Chapter 2, 'Diagnosis, Clinical Description and Prognosis' (15-52), and Cohen et al. 1987, 6. Morreall 1989, 14-15, comments on the incompatibility of egocentrism and a sense of humour.

[77]*Pace* Gruner 1978, 2-4, who states that animals also laugh and that this may indicate their possession of a sense of humour. Babies laugh too but I would hesitate to ascribe to them a sense of humour.

[78]Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*, the opening of lecture one: quoted by Silk 1988, 20. See also Morreall 1989, who also discusses the possible evolutionary advantages of humour.

a listener or reader decides whether or not a given text is humorous. The theories articulated here will form the basis of the examination of Aristophanes as a comic writer which I shall make in the next chapter. In the course of this outline, I have highlighted elements of the model which will play an important rôle in my later discussions and analysis of Aristophanic text.

Chapter Two

The Perception of Humour in Aristophanes

Introduction

In the previous chapter we encountered the modal theory of text classification, a model which is intended to explicate the intuitive processes by which a listener classifies text as humorous. The aim of the present chapter is to consider the implications of this model for the study of humour in Aristophanic comedy. In addition to discussing the specific problems which a listener encounters in classifying Aristophanic text, this process will involve providing examples from Aristophanes of passages which may be categorized as humorous on the grounds that frame abuse and/or maxim violation has occurred.[1]

In this chapter, I shall quote and discuss humorous extracts from Aristophanes' plays. The purpose of this will be to demonstrate how my model accounts for their potential for classification in the humorous mode. Inevitably, these quotations have been removed from their context in the plays in which they originate. In a subsequent chapter, however, the use of the model will be illustrated with reference to an extended piece of text, namely *Peace* 819-921. This will allow the effect on the listener of the accumulation of textual details on a micro-level to be discussed as a whole. In contrast, the present chapter is intended to give an impression, painted in broad brush strokes, of Aristophanic humour and its relationship with the model of text classification. The quotations cited are not intended to represent all the ways in which Aristophanes creates humour but rather to portray the more common devices by which humour is realized in his plays.

It ought to be noted at this point that the terms 'audience member' and 'listener' are used interchangeably in this chapter and are intended to refer to an ideal 'virtual' spectator, however problematic that concept may be.[2] It is to be

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[1] The (inter)relationship between frame abuse and maxim violation is discussed in Chapter 1, p.26.

[2] I coin the term 'virtual' spectator by analogy with Segal's 'virtual' audience (1996, 171 n.36). As far as Aristophanes' original audience is concerned, Segal warns (ibid.), 'we should keep in mind

taken as axiomatic that this ideal spectator undergoes the intuitive processes involved in the classification of text as humorous as articulated in the last chapter.

Aristophanes' Portrayal of Character

In real life and in most fiction - drama included - the concept of a speaker of a given text (in the sense in which 'speaker' has been used up to now) needs no qualification. We regard as the speaker whoever has spoken a given utterance, whether he be a real person or a fictional creation - this much would appear self-evident. However, my model requires a listener to be able to endow the speaker with some ability for thought and some form of personality, since the perception that the speaker is *capable* of maintaining unitary discourse is integral to the judgement that humour has occurred. In most works of fiction, the author sketches his characters in such a way that, as readers or listeners, we are (quite reasonably) wont to talk of them as if they were real human beings. We do this with little or no qualification, ascribing to them thoughts, motivations and personalities. In his article 'The People of Aristophanes', Silk associates such expectations with the 'realist' tradition and its mode of character representation, commenting:[3]

> The people presented have what we may see as a constant relationship with 'reality' - with the world outside as we perceive it or might be presumed to perceive it - because they stand at a constant distance from that real world. They impinge as sentient beings, each with a tendency to be (in Aristotle's language) 'appropriate', 'lifelike' and 'consistent'.

The central thrust of Silk's article is that Aristophanic figures do not strictly belong to this 'realist' tradition, and that whilst 'some Aristophanic characters...lend themselves reasonably well to realist interpretation',[4] it is nevertheless the case that 'the people of Aristophanes *per se* are not strictly

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that we can never be sure how an audience responded, and we should remember that there may be enormous variations among different segments of the audience, from the rude farmer from Acharnae to the friends of Socrates or Agathon.' On the difficulties of reconstructing ancient audience response, see also Lada 1996, 397 and 409 n.1.

[3]Silk 1990, 156.

[4]Ibid., 157.

containable within any realistic understanding of human character at all.'[5] Silk calls the mode of representation of which most of Aristophanes' characters partake 'imagist', characteristic of which is that they are liable to 'act discontinuously...unexpected behaviour, verbal or visual, [being]...their imagist prerogative'; 'if and when they change, they change abruptly and, perhaps, entirely.'[6]

As Silk himself argues, not all Aristophanic characters belong equally to the 'imagist' or 'realist' traditions.[7]

> Most (perhaps all) of Aristophanes' characters belong in *some* degree to the realist tradition, and some of them (like Strepsiades) might be construed - without too much forcing of the evidence - as belonging wholly to it.

For every Strepsiades, however - whose mainly 'realist' representation is broken only occasionally by 'imagist' moments - there is a character such as the *Lysistrata*'s Kalonike whose mode of representation is far from realist. During her opening exchange with Lysistrata, for example, she makes constant asides and comic interjections such as at line 11, where we see her interrupt Lysistrata's flow (11-12):

Λυ. παρὰ μὲν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν νενομίσμεθα
εἶναι πανοῦργοι –
Κα. καὶ γάρ ἐσμεν, νὴ Δία.

Lys. ...in men's opinion we're thought to be such utter rascals -
Ka. And so we are, by Zeus!

The question might be asked: 'what bearing does this discussion of Aristophanes' representation of character have on the subject of humour perception?' For many instances of humour the answer is 'little', since, when a character is being represented in a more-rather-than-less 'realist' way, an audience member may well be able to conceive of that character as a sentient human being, and thus quite unproblematically as the speaker of the text which he is uttering. The consistency with which Strepsiades is represented in the scene

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[5]Ibid., 154.

[6]Ibid., 162.

[7]Ibid., 159.

when he is talking to the Student about the sophists' various investigations, for instance, may well allow us to think of him as a human being (albeit a fictional one). As a result of this, the text's humour in turn may be thought to arise from the fact that he is perceived as 'capable of unitary discourse', but has (say, in the exchange quoted below) 'failed to maintain unitary discourse'. In the following excerpt, the Student is showing Strepsiades a map of Greece on which Athens, amongst other states, has already been located (*Clouds* 214-7):[8]

Στ. ἀλλ' ἡ Λακεδαίμων ποῦ 'σθ';
Μα. ὅπου 'στιν; αὐτηί.
Στ. ὡς ἐγγὺς ἡμων. τοῦτο μεταφροντίζετε,
ταύτην ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἀπαγαγεῖν πόρρω πάνυ.
Μα. ἀλλ' οὐχ οἷόν τε.
Στ. νὴ Δί' οἰμώξεσθ' ἄρα.

Strep. But where is Sparta?
Stud. Where is it? Here.
Strep. How close to us! Dethink that one please, so as to take it a good long way away from us.
Stud. It can't be done.
Strep. In that case, by Zeus, you're going to howl.

Alongside this example of humour can be set many others, however, where the character's more-rather-than-less 'imagist' representation renders impossible the question 'is the character capable of unitary discourse?'. This question presupposes that, if it is not a real human being, then it is at least a character represented in the 'realist' tradition that is being discussed. This is certainly not a relevant question to ask of the character of Kalonike when she interjects, καὶ γάρ ἐσμεν, νὴ Δία, since the 'imagist' mode of her representation is hardly compatible with her being regarded, at this moment, as 'capable' of anything. In the light of this problem, let me proffer an addition to the formula proposed earlier: when a character is being represented in a more rather than less

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[8]Interestingly for the present discussion, Sommerstein treats Strepsiades as if he belongs to the realist tradition, commenting (1982, *ad loc.*) that he 'is very apt to lose his temper'; this is despite Aristophanes' (surely not Strepsiades'!) coinage μεταφροντίζω. It should be noted that Starkie 1911, *ad loc.*, claims that Strepsiades' comments here represent a criticism of 'the laconizing tendencies of Socrates and his friends'. See also Dover 1968a, *ad loc.*, in defence of the reading μεταφροντίζετε and concerning the originality of this word in Aristophanes. I have altered Sommerstein's 'rethink' to 'dethink' to reflect the novelty of the word.

'imagist' way, I suggest it is the case that the audience member regards the *playwright* rather than the character as the 'speaker' of the text. The result of this addition is that the formula for the pragmatic identification of humour becomes somewhat complex, namely:

> Text is judged to be humorous by the audience member - 'the listener' - when the playwright, whilst being perceived as capable of having his characters maintain unitary discourse, is perceived as having his characters fail to maintain unitary discourse.

Since the playwright will no doubt generally be judged by the audience member to be capable of unitary discourse, however, the formula may be simplified as follows.

> Text is judged humorous by the listener when the playwright is perceived as having his characters fail to maintain unitary discourse.

It is just as well to clarify two points at this stage concerning the relationship between my argument in this chapter and the model of text classification. First, the introduction of the notion of playwright as 'speaker' of the text does not mark any kind of methodological innovation as far as the formulation of my model is concerned. Rather, I take it as axiomatic that it is *on an intuitive basis* that the listener regards the playwright as the 'speaker' and that, therefore, it is a perfectly compatible addition to what is intended as a map of an intuitive process. Second, I am not claiming originality for the suggestion that at certain points in the play the listener regards the playwright as the 'speaker' of the text. This observation has been made before in connection with Aristophanes, albeit couched in different terms.[9] Dobrov's is probably the most developed and boldest articulation of this proposition. He speaks of:[10]

> moments when a character becomes, as it were, a puppet in the hands of a clever ventriloquist, i.e., when we sense the author's presence/voice in the speech of a fictional figure as this speech departs from, or surpasses, its speaker in intelligence, sophistication, tone or scope (e.g. of time, awareness, cultural context, etc.).

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[9]See Bain 1977, 3-7 and 90 and more explicitly Ussher 1979, 19 and Dover 1987, 246-7. Gould 1978 discusses the problems of applying modern concepts of characterization to the figures of tragedy: see also Goldhill 1990, 105-14.

[10]Dobrov 1995, 47.

With these 'moments' in mind, Dobrov coins the term 'ventriloquism' which he defines as 'the direct or oblique invasion of the character by the voice of the poet.'[11] To reiterate what was said above, on such occasions as the listener judges 'ventriloquation' to be occurring, he will assess the text's potential for humour through an intuitive judgement as to whether or not Aristophanes has had his characters maintain unitary discourse.

'Imagist' High Points

Aristophanes' 'imagist' mode of character representation may, I believe, be fruitfully considered as one of a set of features which contribute to the characteristic unpredictability and 'exuberance' of his drama.[12] As we have seen, this 'unpredictability' manifests itself in such elements as binary reversals of character, sudden changes in plot, 'ventriloquation', and so on.[13] If we seek to phrase this observation in the terminology associated with my model of text classification, we might say that the frame of Aristophanic drama is highly inclusive. Given that this is so, one might be tempted to argue that in Aristophanic comedy frame abuse will never be perceived as such: that is to say, one might ask 'on what grounds could a listener judge the frame to have been abused when it is so very inclusive?' Such an assertion is, however, counter-intuitive: there are plenty of examples of humorous frame abuse in Aristophanes, a number of which are discussed later in this chapter. However, let us not abandon this line of thought without further discussion. After all, it is perfectly plausible that a listener would find nothing intrinsically humorous in sudden shifts of plot, for example, such as when Dikaiopolis announces the need for a trip to Euripides' house (*Ach.* 394), or in moments when characters change ~~person~~, such as when the Inlaw announces that he will dress as a woman and go to the *Thesmophoria* (*Thesm.* 212). That we do not find such moments humorous is all the more interesting when we consider that they share much in common with instances of frame abuse which we *would* rate as humorous.

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[11]Ibid., 56, where he also coins the term 'discourse irony' for 'the ironic mismatch at many points in the play between a given character...and things the character says, does and knows'.

[12]For 'exuberance' as one of Aristophanes' defining characteristics as a poet, see Silk (forthcoming) *Aristophanes and the Definition of Comedy*. In his article 'Putting on a Dionysus Show', *Times Literary Supplement*, 28 August, 1998, p.18, Silk talks of Aristophanes' 'inclusive exuberance'.

[13]For statements to this effect, see Henderson 1980, 168, Redfield 1990, 328-9; Silk 1990, 153.

In sum, it would appear that the listener is more likely to regard major shifts in plot and character - the 'imagist' high points of the plays - as a distinctive feature of Aristophanic comedy and therefore as compatible with the play's frame, whereas he will typically regard smaller, more local shifts as examples of frame abuse. Why should this be? The answer must lie in the fact that from one moment to the next the degree to which Aristophanes' drama is effectively perceived as 'realist' or 'imagist' varies greatly, and that frame abuse is more likely to be perceived as such in sequences where the characters are portrayed as roughly self-consistent and where the plot is allowed to develop rather than stand subject to rapid change. These realist sequences stand in stark contrast to other points in the play where there are major shifts either in character or plot or both. It is my view that when these major shifts occur, the audience member is reminded of (or becomes conscious of) the inclusive nature of the frame of Aristophanic comedy. This realization detaches him from the action of the play so that he experiences it instead as a piece of theatre acted by actors on a stage in a similar way to when Brecht has his audience experience the *Verfremdungseffekt* or when Pirandello's *Six Characters* complain about the physical appearance of the actors who will play them. At one extreme, an audience member encounters characters who are portrayed in a more-rather-than-less 'imagist' way and which are involved in a plot which is temporally sequential rather than logically consequential. My suggestion is that, at its 'imagist' high points, the full extent of the highly inclusive, no-holds-barred nature of Aristophanic comedy is revealed to an audience member with the result that the concept of 'frame abuse' becomes less relevant to him, since such an inclusive frame is near impossible to abuse. At the other extreme, Aristophanes' characters impinge on the audience as more-rather-than-less 'realist' creations, deviation from the expected behaviour of which, in given situations, may be perceived as 'frame abuse' (or 'maxim violation') and thus may be categorized as humorous.

No doubt these high points of 'imagist' representation are difficult to classify in terms of my model, but, I suggest, this merely reflects the intuitive difficulty a listener or reader would have if asked to decide whether such text was 'humorous', 'serious', 'paradoxical' or 'nonsensical'. Certainly these 'imagist' moments have much in common with humour - they are arguably, like humour, exhilarating and liberating (in the way that play with language liberates us from the confines of everyday logic).[14] Yet 'imagist' high points are not self-evidently humorous in the way that a canned joke is. Such moments inhabit a

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[14]See below, Chapter 3, p.85.

grey area, not quite humour but *like* humour, their classification as a group further complicated by the fact that some moments are more imagist than others.

Having posed the question, 'are "imagist" moments humorous?' (for which a wholly satisfactory answer has eluded us), let us now pose the question in reverse: 'are instances of humour *de facto* "imagist"?' The answer to this must surely be 'yes'. The qualities just ascribed to 'imagism', namely discontinuity, binary reversal and apparent absence of logical consequentiality, may equally be said to be qualities that humorous texts are wont to display. Therefore humour may, I believe, felicitously be described as a subset of 'imagism': 'imagist' moments may or may not be humorous, but humour by its very nature is always to some extent 'imagist'.

Implications of the Model of Text Classification for the Study of Aristophanes

Below, I shall examine a number of instances of humour from the Aristophanic corpus and shall demonstrate how my model can be used to account for their potential for categorization as humorous. These instances of humour are listed, on the one hand, under headings relating to the establishment and subsequent abuse of frame, and on the other, under headings relating to maxim violation.[15] I take it as axiomatic that all instances of verbal humour in Aristophanic comedy rely on frame abuse and/or the violation of my revised version of Grice's maxims of speech.

Under the umbrella heading of 'frame abuse', excerpts of text are grouped together whose humour relies on similar techniques for the establishment and abuse of frame. The categories cited are not intended as an exhaustive list of the techniques employed by Aristophanes to contrive frame abuse, but a sample of the devices which he uses most commonly. Under the heading 'maxim violation', however, instances of humour are cited to exemplify the violation of each one of the maxims of speech discussed in the last chapter. The intention has been to cite extracts which rely solely on the violation of one maxim - the maxim under which each is listed - for their humorous status. Instances of humour which rely on the abuse of more than one maxim are discussed briefly towards the end of the chapter.

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[15]See above, n.1.

The quotations from the Aristophanic corpus which appear in this chapter are intended to represent points in the text which may readily be categorized as humorous. This said, it may well be the case that a modern reader would view many of the excerpts as wit, word-play and/or just plain unfunny. What is more, their enjoyment as humour will no doubt be adversely affected by their extraction from their context in the play, as well as by the absence of stage action and of good delivery by an experienced actor.[16]

In choosing instances of humour with which to illustrate my model it has been impossible to represent all of Aristophanes' plays equally. The bias contained in the choice of examples is not intended to suggest that a play such as the *Lysistrata*, for example, from which many excerpts are cited, is in any way more conducive to analysis in terms of my model than a less well represented play. What my examples do reflect, however, is the theme of sexual and scatological humour.

Exemplifications of the Model: (i) Frame Abuse

For frame abuse to occur, obviously a frame has to be established. The establishment of a frame often manifests itself in terms of the introduction of situations, character-types and interpersonal relationships which are easily recognizable: a fact which may help to account for the trite nature of so much comedy, from Terence to *Terry and June*.

A frame may be brief in duration (such a frame I will call 'simple') or, alternatively, it may pervade a play (an 'elaborate' frame). Below I discuss five very different methods by which frames are established and broken. These methods are qualitatively diverse and the five discussed are intended as a sample rather than an exhaustive list of ways in which Aristophanes contrives frame abuse.

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[16]Cartledge 1990, 21, warns of the difficulties of comprehending, 'the humour, including sense of humour, of an alien culture' and adds, 'the humour of tone, gesture and movement is largely lost'.

Simple Frame Abuse

A example of simple frame abuse is to be found at *Lysistrata* 78-83, where the frame 'Greeting Someone' is evoked. The Spartan woman Lampito is being greeted by her Athenian comrades, and Lysistrata says (78-81):[17]

> ὦ φιλτάτη Λάκαινα, χαῖρε, Λαμπιτοῖ.
> οἵον τὸ κάλλος, ὦ γλυκυτάτη, φαίνεται.
> ὡς δ' εὐχροεῖς, ὡς δὲ σφριγᾷ τὸ σῶμά σου.
> κἂν ταῦρον ἄγχοις.
>
> Welcome, Lampito, my very dear Laconian friend! Darling, what beauty you display! What a fine colour and what a robust frame you've got! You could throttle a bull.

The first line of Lysistrata's greeting follows a notional quasi-colloquial norm, a quality which allows the frame to be quickly and clearly established, and which, one might add, succinctly locates the dialogue within the realm of everyday discourse.[18] Whilst the sentiments expressed in the next two lines seem slightly over-familiar, however, and might not be thought *wholly* appropriate to the frame, the content of the last line - κἂν ταῦρον ἄγχοις - is certainly strange, to the extent that a listener might well judge the frame to have been abused. The frame 'Greeting Someone' is exploited once more at line 83, where Kalonike's greeting to Lampito would certainly leave the listener in no doubt that frame abuse had occurred, since her welcome merely comprises:[19]

> ὡς δὴ καλὸν τὸ χρῆμα τῶν τιτθῶν ἔχεις.
>
> What a splendid pair of tits you've got!

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[17]On this exchange see Henderson 1980, 174-5.

[18]One might say that this opening partakes of the 'realist' rather than 'imagist' tradition: quasi-colloquial dialogue has already been established as a norm in this play. Perhaps a localized establishment of a frame such as this is also an instance on a micro-level of what Cartledge 1990, 19, has observed on a macro-level in Aristophanes' plays, namely that 'the ordinariness of the starting-point is crucial to the comedy, since it provides the necessary flipside to the [play's] surrealist fantasy, inconsequentiality and suspension of normal causality'.

[19]Henderson 1987, *ad loc.*, notes that Kalonike's response is 'less decorous' than Lysistrata's. He also draws attention to the use of τιτθῶν over the more typically comic τιτθίων (see also below, p.181).

A more extended, and arguably more contrived, example of frame abuse occurs at the end of the *Lysistrata*, where the chorus sing odes in which they make generous offers which they then retract (1043-1071 and 1189-1215).[20] Here again, self-consistent presentation of material, characteristic of the 'realist' tradition, is key to establishing a frame which is subsequently broken παρὰ προσδοκίαν.

Elaborate Frames

Sometimes Aristophanes sets up an elaborate frame which he exploits throughout the play. An example of this is the father/son relationship in the *Wasps*, where the two characters are placed in confrontation in such a way that Bdelykleon 'serves as a foil to Philokleon, a standard of normality by which the old man's absurdities may be measured'.[21] An exchange in which this polarization is apparent occurs at 1197-1207:

Βδ. ἀλλ' ἕτερον εἰπέ μοι· παρ' ἀνδράσι ξένοις
πίνων σεαυτοῦ ποῖον ἂν λέξαι δοκεῖς
ἐπὶ νεότητος ἔργον ἀνδρικώτατον;
Φι. ἐκεῖν' ἐκεῖν' ἀνδρειότατόν γε τῶν ἐμῶν,
ὅτ' Ἐργασίωνος τὰς χάρακας ὑφειλόμην.
Βδ. ἀπολεῖς με. ποίας χάρακας; ἀλλ' ὡς ἢ κάπρον
ἐδιώκαθές ποτ' ἢ λαγών, ἢ λαμπάδα
ἔδραμες, ἀνευρὼν ὅ τι νεανικώτατον.
Φι. ἐγῷδα τοίνυν τό γε νεανικώτατον·
ὅτε τὸν δρομέα Φάϋλλον, ὃν βούπαις ἔτι,
εἷλον διώκων λοιδορίας ψήφοιν δυοῖν.

Bdel. Tell me something else: if you were drinking with men you didn't know, what sort of thing you'd done do you think you'd mention as the bravest action of your youth?
Phil. That one, that one was my bravest action, when I pinched the vine-props of Ergasion's.

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[20]See Henderson 1987 on 1043 who parallels the present text with (*inter alia*) *Pax* 1115 and *Ec.* 1144 ff. On these odes see also ib. 1980, 211 and Moulton 1981, 24-8.

[21]MacDowell 1971, 9. Hubbard 1991, 124, comments that: 'the entire confrontation between Bdelycleon and Philcleon can be interpreted in terms of the sophistic opposition between *nomos* and *physis*.'

Bdel. You'll be the death of me. Vine-props indeed! No, how you once hunted a boar or a hare, or ran in a torch-race. Think of the most mettlesome thing you can.

Phil. Well, I know what was the most mettlesome: the time, while I was still a hulking lad, when I went after Phayllus the runner and beat him - by two votes, on a charge of using abusive language.

The expected behaviour patterns of a father and son are also subverted in the first episode of the play in that the son, Bdelykleon, controls the comings and goings of the father.[22]

Aristophanes also sets up an elaborate frame in the *Thesmophoriazousai*, in that he has the Inlaw dress up as a woman and infiltrate an all-female festival. There are numerous examples of the exploitation of this frame, some of the more renowned coming at 466ff. in the speech where the Inlaw enunciates the female vices of which he has supposedly partaken.[23]

Tragic Parody

Tragic parody is worthy of separate mention since it is a vehicle through which Aristophanes often contrives frame abuse.[24] One of the ways tragedy is exploited is the following: Aristophanes will evoke a given tragedy (by means of quotations or through borrowed elements of the play's plot, for example) and thus provide himself with a ready-made 'Tragic' frame which is then available for him to abuse. Tragedies are sometimes parodied very briefly and sometimes at length in Aristophanes' work, but either way the 'Tragic' frame arouses expectations at the level of plot, language or form. The *Thesmophoriazousai* is a particularly rich source of tragic parody. In this play Aristophanes exploits Euripides' *Helen*, *Palamedes*, *Andromeda* and the *Telephos*, each of these plays being parodied for no more than a hundred lines. More extended parody occurs in the *Akharnians*, where much of the plot is dependent on Euripides' *Telephos*, this

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[22]The 1990s BBC television show 'Absolutely Fabulous' works on a similar basis in that the mother and daughter are constantly in conflict, the latter keeping the former's excesses in check.

[23]See Henderson 1991, 89 and MacDowell 1995, 260-1 on this speech.

[24]By 'tragic parody' I mean the parody of specific tragic material rather than paratragedy in general. On this distinction, see Silk 1993, 479.

'Telephos' frame being reinforced by means of a number of quotations from the play.[25]

To illustrate the way in which tragic parody is effected, let us look briefly at the way Aristophanes uses Euripides' *Helen* in the *Thesmophoriazousai*.[26] The frame is evoked succinctly at 850, when the Inlaw announces, ἐγῳ̃δα· τὴν καινὴν Ἑλένην μιμήσομαι, and from here until 928 much of the Inlaw's and Euripides' speech comprises quotations from the play. This frame is abused in two ways. One is that small lapses into non-tragic vocabulary or non-tragic metre are admitted into the Inlaw's or Euripides' speech. An example of this is the introduction into the Inlaw's first utterance within the 'Helen' frame of the adjective μελανοσυρμαῖος to describe Egyptians, a surprise epithet, presumably coming παρὰ προσδοκίαν for μελανόχρως.[27] The surprise element in this adjective is συρμαία ('purge-plant') - as Sommerstein comments,[28] the characterization of the Egyptians by reference to this plant is a 'full-bloodedly comic touch - [an allusion] to their excessive use of bowel-purgatives for medicinal purposes (cf. Peace 1254, Hdt. 2.88)' (855-7):[29]

Νείλου μὲν αἵδε καλλιπάρθενοι ῥοαί,
ὃς ἀντὶ δίας ψακάδος Αἰγύπτου πέδον
λευκῆς νοτίζει μελανοσυρμαῖον λεών.

Sommerstein translates:

This is the beauteous maiden stream of Nile,

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[25]On the *Telephos* parody see Rau 1967, 19-42. On the use of parody in the *Thesmophoriazousai*, see ibid. 51 ff.

[26]On which parody see ibid., 53-65 and Sommerstein 1994 on 855-923.

[27]Thus Rau 1967, 58. Reference to Egyptians' skin-colour is certainly not infrequent: cf. Aesch. *Supp*. 154, 719-20, 745; Hdt. 2.57.2, 2.104.2.

[28]1996, *ad loc.*

[29]See Kamberbeek 1967, 78, in defence of the reading μελανοσυρμαῖον (over van Herwerden's μελανοσυρμαίῳ λεῳ̃) on the grounds that Aristophanes is making a subtle jibe about the grammar of the Euripidean original (*Hel*. 1-3). He further comments that at 857 that Aristophanes, 'fait appel aux sentiments scatophiles du public'. LSJ, s.v., suggest that the adjective has the double meaning 'with black trains to their robes' (σύρματα) and 'fond of purges' (συρμαῖαι). συρμαία no doubt has a neutral-cum-colloquial feel: it is found elsewhere in the classical era in Aristophanes (*loc. cit.*), Herodotos (*loc. cit.* and 2.125), the Hippokratic corpus (*Mul.* 1.78, al.)) and a prose fragment of Kritias (*fr*. 70.4 D.-K.).

Who takes the place of heaven's showers, and waters
Egypt's white plains and swarthy laxative-takers.

Alternatively, Aristophanes allows what Sommerstein refers to as the tragic 'spell' to be broken by utterances from other characters in the scene,[30] as in the following example (877-80) where Kritylla interrupts the Euripides and the Inlaw's fantastic paratragic dialogue with some rude truths:[31]

Ευ. ποίαν δὲ χώραν εἰσεκέλσαμεν σκάφει;
Κη. Αἴγυπτον.
Ευ. ὢ δύστηνος· οἷ πεπλώκαμεν.
Κρ. πείθει τι τούτῳ τῷ κακῶς ἀπολουμένῳ
ληροῦντι λῆρον; Θεσμοφόριον τουτογί.

Eur. And in what country came our bark to land?
Inlaw In Egypt.
Eur. Woe is me, how far we have wandered!
Krit. Do you really believe the blasted villain when he burbles such nonsense? This here is the Thesmophorium!

In short, the 'Tragic' frame sets up expectations concerning vocabulary, metre and subject matter which Aristophanes can subsequently frustrate to create humour.

Register Changes

A closely related device which is commonly used by Aristophanes to create humour is the manufacture of a sudden change in tone: that is, a 'High-Register' frame is established which is then broken by low-register speech, or sometimes vice versa.[32] Often an obscenity will be introduced abruptly into a passage of paratragic dialogue, as at *Lys*. 708ff., where Lysistrata concludes a long series of

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[30]Sommerstein 1994 on 855-923.

[31]Note how not only the subject matter but also the diction and scansion of ~~Krytill~~a's lines are less tragic than those which precede.

[32]One is inclined to say that sudden tone changes from high to low are nearly always humorous, whereas changes from low to high are only sometimes so. It is difficult to construe ὦ πόλις πόλις of *Ach*. 27 as humorous, for example. One suspects that a sudden dip in tone tends to evoke a 'Playful' frame whereas a sudden heightening in tone does not.

high register exchanges, mainly in iambic trimeters, with a line containing a primary obscenity:[33]

Χο.γρ ἄνασσα πράγους τοῦδε καὶ βουλεύματος,
τί μοι σκυθρωπὸς ἐξελήλυθας δόμων;
Λυ. κακῶν γυναικῶν ἔργα καὶ θήλεια φρὴν
ποιεῖ μ' ἀθυμεῖν περιπατεῖν τ' ἄνω κάτω.
Χο.γρ τί φής; τί φής;
Λυ. ἀληθῆ, ἀληθῆ.
Χο.γρ τί δ' ἐστὶ δεινόν; φράζε ταῖς σαυτῆς φίλαις.
Λυ. ἀλλ' αἰσχρὸν εἰπεῖν καὶ σιωπῆσαι βαρύ.
Χο.γρ μή νυν κρύψῃς ὅ τι πεπόνθαμεν κακόν.
Λυ. βινητιῶμεν, ᾗ βράχιστον τοῦ λόγου.

Chor. O sovereign of this action and this scheme,
Pray, why cross-visaged com'st thou from thy halls?
Lys. 'Tis worthless women's deeds and female hearts
That make me walk despondent to and fro.
Chor. What say'st thou? What say'st thou?
Lys. 'Tis true, 'tis true.
Chor. What is 't that troubles thee? Speak to thy friends.
Lys. 'Tis shame to say, yet grievous to conceal.
Chor. Then do not hide from me the ill we suffer.
Lys. In brief the tale to tell - we need a fuck.[34]

Another example of this phenomenon occurs at *Lys.* 770, where a reported oracle, composed in dactylic hexameter, contains a *double entendre* on the word χελιδόνες, which can refer either to 'swallows' or 'cunts'.[35]

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[33]Henderson 1987, *ad loc.*, comments that, 'the whole passage is typically tragic and we need not suppose that the spectators were expected to recall any particular source(s).' Henderson's analysis of the way Aristophanes creates his pastiche of tragic idiom and vocabulary in this passage is admirably thorough. See also Sommerstein 1990 on these lines.

[34]It will be noted that Sommerstein's translation of this line inverts the order of the Greek to deliver the punch at the *end* of the line. Henderson 1987, *ad loc.*, notes the line's similarity to Soph. *El.* 673 which also contains a blunt revelation: τέθνηκ' Ὀρέστης· ἐν βραχεῖ συνθεὶς λέγω. On the *Lys.* passage see also Dover 1972, 74 and Henderson 1991, 41-2.

[35]On χελιδόνες see Taillardat 1965, 75. This passage is discussed at greater length in Chapter 4.

Sometimes, though, the opposite scenario occurs, whereby bawdy, colloquial dialogue is followed by paratragedy, as in the famous moment from the same play, where Lysistrata's recommendation of the sex strike falls on rather deaf and unhappy ears (124ff.):[36]

> ἀφεκτέα τοίνυν ἐστὶν ἡμῖν τοῦ πέους.
> τί μοι μεταστρέφεσθε; ποῖ βαδίζετε;
> αὖται, τί μοιμυᾶτε κἀνανεύετε;
> τί χρὼς τέτραπται; τί δάκρυον κατείβεται;

> Well then: we must abstain from - cock. Why are you turning your backs on me? Where are you going? I ask you, why are you pursing your lips and tossing your heads? 'Why pales your colour, why this flow of tears?'

Stereotypical Character-Types

One device Aristophanes uses to establish a frame quickly is the introduction into his plays of stock character-types about which his audience has certain expectations, these expectations being similar to those aroused by a frame. There are a number of such character-types in Old Comedy with predictable traits: women, for example, are often characterized as sex-mad and bibulous; old men as cantankerous and conservative, and so on.[37] Character-types such as these are instantly perceived as having certain qualities, the expected discourse connected with which the playwright may then have the character either diverge from or conform to.

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[36]Henderson 1987, *ad loc.*, highlights the elevated features of Lysistrata's response to the wives. Note especially the epic χρώς of 127, a line which, despite the speech marks of Sommerstein's translation, is in fact based on no known original, as he himself notes (*ad loc.*).

[37]Ehrenberg 1951, 40, posits that there are 'types' rather than 'individual beings' or 'characters' in Aristophanes' plays, and details the characteristics of such types as farmers (73-94) and slaves (165-91). He adds that, 'the type, once fixed, needed little change or improvement. There was no need to create it anew; it existed and had early become a permanent factor in comedy.' See also Ussher 1979, 13 and 20. I should add the *caveat* that such 'typicalization' is still always liable to be momentary or subsumed within imagist premises: Aristophanes is not like Menander, many of whose *dramatis personae* are to all intents and purposes simply 'types'.

When Aristophanes contrives frame abuse which relies on stereotypical character-types, more often than not the humour stems from his portrayal of the character in question as unable to act contrary to stereotype. The following humorous exchange from the *Thesmophoriazousai*, for example, depends for its success on the audience's knowledge of the stock female attribute of bibulousness. At this point in the play, the Inlaw is suspected of being an intruder and so is tested on his knowledge of last year's rituals (628-32):

Κρ. σὺ δ' εἰπέ μοι,
ὅ τι πρῶτον ἡμῖν τῶν ἱερῶν ἐδείκνυτο.
Κη. φέρ' ἴδω, τί μέντοι πρῶτον ἦν; ἐπίνομεν.
Κρ. τί δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο δεύτερον;
Κη. προὐπίνομεν.
Κρ. ταυτὶ μὲν ἤκουσάς τινος.

Kr. And you, tell me: which of the ritual items was first revealed to us?
In. Let me see now, what was the first thing? [*with a sudden inspiration*] We drank.
Kr. And after that, what was second?
In. We drank some toasts.
Kr. You've been told by someone!

Rather than always rely on character-typing where the type in question is already known to the audience, Aristophanes sometimes creates original character-types in the course of a play.[38] For instance, young men are not characterized as sex-mad throughout all Old Comedy, but they are intermittently to be perceived as such for the purposes of the *Lysistrata*'s plot and much of its humour. Similarly, the old men in the *Wasps* are in the first part of the play characterized as obsessed with jury service. Another way in which Aristophanes introduces character-types into his plays is in the form of named individuals. Rather than these characters representing character portraits of the people concerned, they might be more fruitfully thought of as types such as the mad philosopher (Sokrates), the effeminate pathic (Kleisthenes), and so on.[39]

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[38]I see no contradiction in there being 'imagist' moments in Aristophanic drama and his being able effectively to create new character-types in the course of his plays: presumably such new types are best sketched during the plays less-rather-than-more 'imagist' sequences.

[39]Ehrenberg ibid., 40, concurs that Aristophanes' historical figures are 'types'. Ussher 1979, 13 also notes that Sokrates is 'a "type" of the new learning.'

Aristophanes exploits these character-types in two different ways. The figure in question is portrayed either as conforming to a stereotype or, more elaborately, as having a bad character trait in conflict with a more noble public or private rôle.

The first technique is the more common: that is, Aristophanes exploits character-types by having them conform to stereotypical or expected behaviour. Such behaviour in the *Lysistrata*, for instance, involves women being sex-mad and men being unable to control their mounting sexual desires. As we have seen, Kalonike freely admits that all women are πανοῦργοι, scurrilous (12) and this is borne out by the action of the play. The women are initially portrayed as extremely loathe to take part in the sex strike (124ff.), and when later in the play various women attempt to steal away from the encampment on the acropolis, their excuses reveal sexual motives behind their desire to escape (720ff.). The men on the other hand are slaves to their sexual desires. At 1073, when the Spartans arrive, each is wearing a pig-pen χοιροκομεῖον, around his thighs; and at 1083, the Athenian men are said to be bent over like wrestlers, ὥσπερ παλαιστάς.

Alternatively, character-types are portrayed as conforming to stereotypical behaviour but in so doing diverging from behaviour which would be more appropriate given their public or private rôles. This is the case at *Lysistrata* 1076ff., for example, where the ambassadors of Athens and Sparta, ostensibly discussing peace arrangements, are in fact ogling the young woman Διαλλαγή, Reconciliation. Although discussing a political situation, the ambassadors are portrayed as using obscene language and as overcome by their lusts.

Another such example occurs at *Lys*. 889ff., where Kinesias attempts to bring his wife, Kalonike, home on the pretext that he is concerned for the plight of their child. This concern disappears, however, when the opportunity arises to have sex and at this point he quickly disposes of the child. The audience may, then, perceive his actions as conforming to expected behaviour in that all young men in this play are presented as desperate for sex. On the other hand, his actions have diverged from expected behaviour in that he gets rid of his baby so soon after he has been presented to the audience as a good and caring father.

Exemplifications of the Model: (ii) Maxim Violation

Up to now we have been looking at some of the more common techniques used by Aristophanes to contrive frame abuse in his plays. Let us now, though, turn our attention to humour stemming from maxim violation. The Aristophanic excerpts cited in this section owe their potential for classification as humorous to the presence of at least one violation of a maxim of speech. It will be recalled that my revised version of Grice's maxims are as follows:

1. Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

2. Quality:
a. Do not say what you believe to be implausible.
b. Do not say that for which you clearly lack adequate evidence.

3. Relation: Be relevant.

4. Manner:
a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
b. Avoid ambiguity.
c. Be orderly.

It is of interest to note that Aristophanes favours the violation of some maxims more than others. As will become apparent, ambiguity and implausibility especially play a major rôle in his humour.

1. Quantity: make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)

Given that the violation of this maxim holds abundant possibilities for a comic writer, there are perhaps surprisingly few examples of its violation in Aristophanes. Probably the most protracted instance comes in the *Thesmophoriazousai* when the mythical figure of Echo is brought on stage. Predictably, Echo is incapable of initiating dialogue and she constantly abuses the maxim of quantity in that none of her utterances is informative. Initially, Echo repeats just the endings of lines, but in the following exchange the Inlaw's ever-more staccato lines are repeated in full (1080-1):

Κη. τί κακόν;
Ηχ. τί κακόν;
Κη. ληρεῖς.
Ηχ. ληρεῖς.
Κη. οἴμωζ'.
Ηχ. οἴμωζ'.
Κη. ὀτότυζ'.
Ηχ. ὀτότυζ'.

Inlaw What's the matter with you?
Echo What's the matter with you?
Inlaw You're drivelling!
Echo You're drivelling!
Inlaw Curse you!!
Echo Curse you!!
Inlaw Bugger off!!!
Echo Bugger off!!!

2. Quality:

a. Do not say what you believe to be implausible

b. Do not say that for which you clearly lack adequate evidence

Although the maxim of 'Quality' is often exploited by Aristophanes to create humour, I shall offer just a handful of examples of its violation. As can be judged from the examples in this section, it is not always easy to assign instances of humour which violate the 'Quality' maxim to one sub-category rather than the other, and for this reason the two sub-categories will be treated together. Typical examples involve perverse reasoning, as at *Akharnians* 410-1 where Dikaiopolis proffers an explanation for why Euripides creates the characters he does:[40]

ἀναβάδην ποιεῖς
ἐξὸν καταβάδην; οὐκ ἐτὸς χωλοὺς ποιεῖς.

Do you compose with your feet up when you could have them down?
No wonder you create cripples.

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[40]See my appendix n.10 on alternative interpretations of these lines.

Similarly perverse logic is offered in the *Lysistrata* where the Boiotian woman's nationality is proven by the fact that, like Boiotia itself, she has a καλὸν...πεδιόν, a nice 'plain', a *double entendre* for pubic hair (87-8).

A more protracted piece of perverse reasoning comes at *Akharnians* 916ff. Nikharkos sets on the Boiotian for importing wicks and warns that these items might be used to set the dockyard on fire. The less-than-sound logic is duly challenged by Dikaiopolis:[41]

Νι. ἐκ τῶν πολεμίων γ' εἰσάγεις θρυαλλίδας.
Δι. ἔπειτα φαίνεις δῆτα διὰ θρυαλλίδα;
Νι. αὕτη γὰρ ἐμπρήσειεν ἂν τὸ νεώριον.
Δι. νεώριον θρυαλλίς;
Νι. οἶμαι.
Δι. τίνι τρόπῳ;
Νι. ἐνθεὶς ἂν εἰς τίφην ἀνὴρ Βοιώτιος
ἅψας ἂν εἰσπέμψειεν εἰς τὸ νεώριον
δι' ὑδρορρόας, βορέαν ἐπιτρήσας μέγαν.
κεἶπερ λάβοιτο τῶν νεῶν τὸ πῦρ ἅπαξ,
σελαγοῖντ' ἂν αἴφνης.
Δι. ὦ κάκιστ' ἀπολούμενε,
σελαγοῖντ' ἂν ὑπὸ τίφης τε καὶ θρυαλλίδος;

Nik. You are importing lamp-wicks from enemy territory.
Dik. You mean you are showing him up by virtue of a wick?
Nik. [*holding up a wick*] This could set the dockyard on fire.
Dik. A wick set the dockyard on fire?
Nik. I fancy so.
Dik. How?
Nik. A Boiotian could put it into a beetle-boat, could light it and send it down to the dockyard by a drain, waiting for a strong north wind before doing so. Then if the fire once got hold of the ships, they would be ablaze on the instant.

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[41]Rennie 1909, *ad loc.*, highlights the repetition of ἄν in lines 920-4 which, he claims, 'emphasizes the hypothetical nature of the whole affair'. He further comments on these five lines, 'the difficulty of this passage is in the fact that it is meant to be nonsensical'. Both Rennie 1909 and Starkie 1909, *ad loc.*, suggest that the burning of the dockyards was a genuine fear at Athens. On these lines see also Sommerstein 1980, *ad loc.*, who highlights the exploitation of the double meanings of φαίνω and διά in 917.

Dik. You perishing idiot! Ablaze from a beetle-boat and a wick?

A similarly extended piece of perverse logic occurs in the following speech, where one of the women of the *Ekklesiazousai* reasons that there must be alcohol present when the men meet at the assembly (135-43):

Γυ.α τί δ'; οὐ πίνουσι κἀν τηἐκκλησίᾳ;
Πρ. ἰδού γέ σοι πίνουσι.
Γυ.α νὴ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν,
καὶ ταῦτά γ' εὔζωρον. τὰ γοῦν βουλεύματα
αὐτῶν ὅσ' ἂν πράξωσιν ἐνθυμουμένοις
ὥσπερ μεθυόντων ἐστὶ παραπεπληγμένα.
καὶ νὴ Δία σπένδουσί γ'· ἢ τίνος χάριν
τοσαῦτ' ἂν ηὔχοντ', εἴπερ οἶνος μὴ παρῆν;
καὶ λοιδοροῦνταί γ' ὥσπερ ἐμπεπωκότες,
καὶ τὸν παροινοῦντ' ἐκφέρουσ' οἱ τοξόται.

Wom. What, don't they drink at the assembly, too?
Prax. Listen to you - 'don't they drink'!
Wom. They *do*, by Artemis, and pretty strong stuff at that! At any rate their policies, if you consider all the things they do, are crazy enough to be the work of drunkards. And what's more, they pour libations, they do; or else why would they make all those prayers, if there wasn't any wine there? *And* they rail at each other like men who've had a few; and then someone turns violent and is carried out by the archers.

Also relatable to this category is the phenomenon of 'identification metaphor': that is, a word or phrase taken from one area of reference and applied directly to another as a metaphor. The humour stems from the surprising appropriateness of the metaphor in its new context. Examples of identification metaphors include Lysistrata's statement following the women's initial rejection of the sex-strike, that women are, οὐδὲν γάρ...πλὴν Ποσειδῶν καὶ σκάφη (*Lys.* 139), 'nothing but Poseidon and a tub',[42] alluding to the events of Sophokles' *Tyro* (a play in which Tyro is seduced by Poseidon and the illegitimate children from the union are cast adrift in a skiff). Another example occurs a few lines before at *Lys.* 131: Kalonike says at 115-6 that she will split herself in two like a flat fish if

[42]Henderson 1991, 165-6, posits that this was a proverbial expression, but does not hazard a guess at when it became such.

that will bring peace, but now following her refusal to take part in the sex strike, Lysistrata addresses her as ὦ ψῆττα (131), which Sommerstein translates 'Madam Flounder'.

3. Relation: be relevant

Identifying examples of the abuse of this maxim is problematic for the reason that, at what I have called the more 'imagist' moments of Aristophanic drama, a listener is reminded of the plays' no-holds-barred nature. At such moments, the listener is unlikely to find any comment or action irrelevant, since he is aware of how very inclusive the frame of Aristophanic drama can be. So, when Dikaiopolis states the need to visit Euripides at *Ach.* 394 - μοι βαδιστέ' ἐστὶν ὡς Εὐριπίδην - an audience member is unlikely to judge the maxim of relevance to have been violated despite the fact that it is not immediately apparent what relevance this visit has to the action of the play.

There are, however, abuses of this maxim to be found in the more-rather-than-less realist sequences of the plays which one would certainly be inclined to regard as instances of humour. Many of these examples could also be classed as examples of frame abuse. A number occur when a character-type is unable to act contrary to stereotype (a scenario discussed above) as in the following excerpt from the *Thesmophoriazousai* (643-4), where we meet a stereotypical Aristophanic young woman - stereotypical in that she is portrayed as sex-mad. At this point of the play, Kleisthenes and the women are trying to expose the Inlaw as an impostor. They are trying to locate his phallos and one of the women becomes distracted when she catches sight of it.

Κλ. ἀνίστασ' ὀρθός. ποῖ τὸ πέος ὠθεῖς κάτω;
Γυ$^{\alpha}$. τοδὶ διέκυψε καὶ μάλ' εὔχρων, ὦ τάλαν.

Kleisth. Stand up straight! Where do you think you're shoving that prick of yours down there?
Wom. [*behind*] It's peeping out here - and such a lovely colour too, you cheeky boy!

On occasion a modern reader of Aristophanes encounters text which he suspects would have been judged as humorous by an ancient audience despite the fact that it contains references which he does not understand, perhaps to customs or figures with which he has little or no acquaintance. Often this

suspicion arises from his sense that the maxim of relevance has been violated. I offer the following excerpt from the *Knights* as an example. During their *agon*, the Paphlagonian and the Sausage-Seller produce oracles concerning Demos, one of which contains a reference to a certain Smikythe (965-9):

Πα. ἀλλ' οἵ γ' ἐμοὶ λέγουσιν ὡς ἄρξαι σε δεῖ
χώρας ἁπάσης ἐστεφανωμένον ῥόδοις.
Αλ. οὐμοὶ δέ γ' αὖ λέγουσιν ὡς ἁλουργίδα
ἔχων κατάπαστον καὶ στεφάνην ἐφ' ἅρματος
χρυσοῦ διώξει Σμικύθην καὶ κύριον.

Paph. But *my* oracles say that you are destined to rule over every land and be garlanded with roses.
Saus. And mine say that, wearing a spangled purple robe and diadem, riding a golden chariot, you will pursue...Smikythe (and husband) through the courts.

The scholia inform us that the reference in 969 is to a man named Smikythes whose name Aristophanes has changed into a feminine form. The text further implies that his status as a woman would render necessary the presence of a κύριος should he be prosecuted in court, and the scholiast makes clear that 'ἡ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ κύριος' is a standard legal formula.[43] The reader suspects that the text is humorous because of the incongruity of the reference but does so without necessarily understanding its significance (incidentally, he may also note the παρὰ προσδοκίαν after διώξει, the ambiguity of which - 'pursue'/'prosecute' - is also being exploited).

4. Manner:

a. Avoid obscurity of expression

There are a number of ways in which this maxim is violated in Aristophanes. Novel coinages and unusual words form one category of humour dependent on such abuse - a novel coinage being, by definition, an obscure word in so far as it

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[43]Neil 1901, *ad loc.*, conceives Smikythes as being open to prosecution along the same lines as Timarkhos. On these lines and more specifically on the possible identity of Smikythes, see Sommerstein 1981, *ad loc.*

will never have been encountered by a listener before.[44] Whilst there are doubtless many coinages in Aristophanes which would not have struck his audience as any more humorous than they do a modern audience, there exist others whose potential for categorization as humorous seems indisputable.[45] Amongst these are to be numbered the –ικός adjectives found at Knights 1378ff., the lengthy focus on which suggests an exploitation for humorous effect.[46] Also, Aristophanes' longer compound-words are ripe candidates for categorization as humorous.[47] Examples include σπερμαγοραιολεκιθολαχανοπώλιδες and σκοροδοπανδοκευτριαρτοπώλιδες, at *Lysistrata* 457-8, which Sommerstein translates 'brood of the porridge and vegetable market' and 'garlic-landlady-bread sellers'. One might add that when a listener meets such extravagant coinages he no doubt judges Aristophanes to be their author and not the character in whose mouth we find them.

Coinages or unusual words with a sexual edge may also impinge as humorous. This is most likely helped by the fact that their obscene reference may well signal a 'Playful' frame for a listener . The *Lysistrata*'s σπλεκοῦν is a coinage (it would appear) with the reference 'to fuck',[48] and other unusual words from this play include σάκανδρον, 'man-sack' for 'testicles' at 824 and ὑσσάκων, 'pig-sacks', presumably for 'cunts' (1001).[49]

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[44]I use the term 'novel coinage' rather than simply 'coinage' to avoid including ordinary-sounding neologisms such as 're-boil' and 'undiscussable' in this category. See Redfern 1989, 207 and 216 and Algeo 1975, 1-2 for different categories of coined words.

[45]Aristophanes coins plenty of shorter words whose tone is difficult to judge but which one hesitates to call 'humorous'. An example of this is στενοκωκύτους (*Lys.* 448), which refers to hair. LSJ translates this as 'so fast set in, that one screams when it is pulled out', and Sommerstein translates it as 'groan-a-wailing'. Such words may be better described by Silk's term 'exuberant': see n.12 above.

[46]Cf. *Nub.* 1172-3 and *Vesp.* 1209. On these adjectives see in particular Peppler 1910 and Chantraine 1956, 97-171.

[47]Which Redfern would describe as 'tall words', Redfern 1989, 207.

[48]The scholia suggest a connection with πλέκεσθαι cf. *Pl.* 1082 διασπλεκωμένη. Schwyzer 1939, 1.413 suggests that this verb could be a contraction of εἰς πλέκους meaning 'into the sack'. See, however, Henderson 1987, *ad loc.*, who discusses the possibility that the word is Laconian and Sommerstein 1990, *ad loc.*

[49]As Henderson notes (1991, 21) ὑσσάκων is conjectured at Arch. *fr.* 48.8 and posits that this lexeme was most likely not invented by Aristophanes (133). See also Taillardat 1965, 75. σάκανδρον is a *hapax legomenon*: ibid., 76.

The following excerpt from the *Thesmophoriazousai* represents a quite different way in which the fourth maxim might be violated. Here Agathon presents his reasons for not attending the *Thesmophoria* dressed as a woman to plead Euripides' cause. Agathon says that women dislike him because they think he steals their ἔργα νυκτερείσια and filches away their θήλειαν Κύπριν. The Inlaw interprets Agathon's expressions as merely signifying βινεῖσθαι, 'to be fucked'. An audience member is thus invited to re-construe them as an obscenities - euphemisms for which far simpler expressions exist. It ought to be added that in an example such as this the change of register also contributes to the text's potential for humour (*Thesm.* 202-6):[50]

Ευ. τί δ' ἔστιν ὅ τι δέδοικας ἐλθεῖν αὐτόσε;
Αγ. κάκιον ἀπολοίμην ἂν ἢ σύ.
Ευ. πῶς;
Αγ. ὅπως;
δοκῶν γυναικῶν ἔργα νυκτερείσια
κλέπτειν ὑφαρπάζειν τε θήλειαν Κύπριν.
Κη. ἰδού γε κλέπτειν· νὴ Δία βινεῖσθαι μὲν οὖν.

Sommerstein translates:

Eur. What is it you're afraid of about going along there?
Ag. I'd be even worse torn apart than you.
Eur. How come?
Ag. How come? Because they think I steal women's *knock*turnal business, and rob them of the female's natural rights.
In. 'Steal' indeed! Get fucked, that's what you mean!

b. Avoid ambiguity.

This is probably the maxim most commonly violated by Aristophanes for the creation of humour. Some examples are very simple, as at *Peace* 825-6, where Aristophanes has Trygaios interpret the slave's question in such a way as to highlight the ambiguity of the verb πάσχω ('suffer'/'experience'):[51]

Οι. τί δ' ἔπαθες;

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[50]See Sommerstein 1994, *ad loc.*, on Agathon's lines. νυκτερείσια is a *hapax legomenon.*

[51]This passage is discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

Τρ. ἤλγουν τὼ σκέλη μακρὰν ὁδὸν
διεληλυθώς.

Slave What happened to you?
Tryg. I got sore legs from travelling such a long way.

No doubt, however, Aristophanes is more renowned for ambiguities with a sexual edge - his obscene *double entendres*. Although these will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, a few *double entendres* will be presented here to exemplify how their potential for humour results from the violation of this maxim. A wonderful example of sustained ambiguity comes in the Proboulos' speech in the *Lysistrata* where it is explained how husbands inadvertently ask to be cuckolded. The speech can be read in both a sexual and non-sexual light, these alternative readings made possible by the presence of the ambiguous words and phrases which, in the following excerpt, I have highlighted in bold (408-13):[52]

'ὦ χρυσοχόε, τὸν ὅρμον ὃν ἐπεσκεύασας,
ὀρχουμένης μου τῆς γυναικὸς ἑσπέρας
ἡ **βάλανος** ἐκπέπτωκεν ἐκ τοῦ **τρήματος**.
ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν ἔστ' **ἐς Σαλαμῖνα πλευστέα**·
σὺ δ' ἢν σχολάσῃς, **πάσῃ τέχνῃ** πρὸς ἑσπέραν
ἐλθὼν ἐκείνῃ **τὴν βάλανον ἐνάρμοσον**.'

'Goldsmith, that necklace you mended - last night my wife was **dancing** [=fucking], and the **pin**'s slipped out the **hole**. Now I've got **to cross over to Salamis** [=to have sex? visit a prostitute?]; so if you're free, could you come over in the evening **with all your equipment** and **fit a pin in her hole**, please.'

Protracted sexual ambiguity is to be found in other passages, such as the scene at *Lysistrata* 731ff. where the women trying to leave the acropolis offer various excuses, all of which can be read in a sexual light, or more notoriously in the exchange in the *Akharnians* between Dikaiopolis and the Megarian, where the double meaning of the word χοῖρος ('pig'/'cunt') is so ruthlessly exploited (from 764ff.). Of course, there is also an abundance of *double entendres* which do not occur as part of an extended sequence, an example of which is Lysistrata's comment to the sex-starved Kinesias (*Lys.* 855), that, ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡ γυνή σ' ἔχει διὰ

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[52]Henderson 1987 notes, concerning 407-19, that the goldsmith was one of 'the stock characters in tales of the cuckold, as the door-to-door salesman and mailman are today'.

στόμα, 'your wife always has you on her lips', or more literally 'through her mouth'.

Another form the abuse of this maxim can take is the technique of 'unblending', that is the extrapolation of meaning from a word through its formal similarities to another word or words.[53] An instance of this occurs at *Lysistrata* 66-8 where the deme of 'Αναγῡρουῦς is re-endowed with its literal meaning of the malodorous plant, ἀνάγυρος, from which it got its name.[54]

Κα. ἰοὺ ἰού
πόθεν εἰσίν;
Λυ. 'Αναγυρουντόθεν.
Κα. νὴ τὸν Δία·
ὁ γοῦν ἀνάγυρός μοι κεκινῆσθαι δοκεῖ.

Sommerstein's translation reads:

Kal. Ugh! Where are they from?
Lys. Lousia.
Kal. Dead right; seems to me we've opened a real *can* of lice!

c. Be orderly.

There is not an abundance of examples of the violation of this maxim in Aristophanes. This maxim is no doubt abused far more often in conversation than in written texts for the simple reason that the author of a written text has time to order his thoughts, and is far less likely to make an accidental slip than someone speaking *ad hoc*. Nevertheless, there is no *prima facie* reason why Aristophanes should not have his characters abuse this maxim and Aristophanes does indeed on occasion create humour through its abuse. Some portions of long speeches, for instance, may fall into this category, such as the Inlaw's speech at the Thesmophoria where he goes off on a number of tangents whilst listing various feminine vices (466ff.).

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[53]Redfern 1989, 219. This is similar to Freud's 'Klangwitz': Freud 1960, 30. Cf. Silk's concept of 're-etymology' (1974, 118 et al.).

[54]As Henderson notes (1987, *ad loc.*) that the phrase μὴ κίνει τὸν ἀνάγυρον was proverbial signifying 'don't stir up trouble'. He adds that νὴ τὸν Δία also introduces humour at *Av.* 479: perhaps this phrase helps to frame the text as 'Playful'.

At other points in the plays, one character will interrupt another's speech, a very brief (and minimally humorous) example of which occurs at *Peace* 826, where Aristophanes has Trygaios interrupt the servant's question:[55]

Οι. ἴθι νυν κάτειπέ μοι –
Τρ. τὸ τί;

Slave Well now, tell me -
Tryg. What?

A more sustained example of disorderly speech is the Inlaw's repeated interruption of the ode of Agathon's servant at *Thesmophoriazousai* 39ff., as in the following excerpt (46-50), which reaches its climax in the uttering of a primary obscenity:[56]

θε. πτηνῶν τε γένη κατακοιμάσθω,
θηρῶν τ' ἀγρίων πόδες ὑλοδρόμων
μὴ λυέσθων –
Κη. βομβαλοβομβάξ.
θε. μέλλει γὰρ ὁ καλλιεπὴς Ἀγάθων,
πρόμος ἡμέτερος –
Κη. μῶν βινεῖσθαι;

Serv. Let the tribes of birds be lulled to sleep,
let the feet of the beasts that range the woods
be bound fast in stillness -
Inlaw boom didi boom di boom!
Serv. For Agathon of the lovely language,
our suzerain, is about -
Inlaw Not to be fucked, is he?

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[55]Again, this passage is the subject of close discussion in Chapter 5.

[56]Sommerstein 1994, *ad loc.*, comments that, 'βομβαλοβομβάξ is a nonsense [word] evidently meant to imply that the servant's grandiloquent utterances are no more than meaningless noise.'

Multiple Maxim Violation

A principle that has been demonstrated in the latter half of this chapter is that humour need only rely on the violation of a single maxim of speech. This is not to say, however, that humour never or even seldom arises from the violation of more than one maxim: indeed, a large proportion of Aristophanic humour relies on multiple maxim violation. To end this chapter, let us look briefly at two examples of this phenomenon.

The first involves another excerpt from the *Thesmophoriazousai*. At this point in the play, the Inlaw is suspected of being a male impostor at the festival and so is questioned by Kleisthenes. The full range of maxims - 'Quantity', 'Quality', 'Relation' and 'Manner' - could all be said to have been violated by the Inlaw's answers (618-22):

Κλ. εἰπέ μοι,
τίς ἐστ' ἀνήρ σοι;
Κη. τὸν ἐμὸν ἄνδρα πυνθάνει;
τὸν δεῖνα γιγνώσκεις, τὸν ἐκ Κοθωκιδῶν;
Κλ. τὸν δεῖνα; ποῖον;
Κη. ἔσθ' ὁ δεῖνα, ὃς καί ποτε
τὸν δεῖνα τὸν τοῦ δεῖνα –
Κλ. ληρεῖν μοι δοκεῖς.

Kleisth. Tell me, who is your husband?
Inlaw You want to know who my husband is? [*After a pause*] Do you know...er...Whatsisname, the one from Kothokidai?
Kleisth. Whatsisname? Which one is that?
Inlaw It's the same Whatsisname who once gave Whatsisname, son of Whatsisname a -
Kleisth. I think you're whittering.

In the next excerpt, fewer maxims are violated. It is the combination of irrelevance (maxim 3) and ambiguity (maxim 4b) which would lead a listener to rate the chorus' utterance of *Lys*. 676-8 as humorous. They make the following comment - a thinly veiled *double entendre* - while listing ways in which women are pugnacious and determined adversaries:

ἢν δ' ἐφ' ἱππικὴν τράπωνται, διαγράφω τοὺς ἱππέας·
ἱππικώτατον γάρ ἐστι χρῆμα κἄποχον γυνή.

κοὐκ ἂν ἀπολίσθοι τρέχοντος·

And if they turn to horsemanship, you can forget about our cavalry. There's nothing so equestrian as a woman or so good a mounter, and even at a gallop she won't slip off.

Conclusion

The chief purpose of this chapter has been to show how my model is effective in classifying Aristophanic text as humorous. We have looked at both the more common techniques whereby Aristophanes contrives frame abuse and the way in which Aristophanic humour arises from the violation of the various maxims of speech. In addition to this, I have discussed the specific feature of the 'imagist' high points of Aristophanes and the difficulties a listener faces in attempting to classify such moments in Aristophanes' plays in terms of the four modes of discourse ('seriousness', 'humour'; 'paradox' and 'nonsense'). It has been the purpose of the present discussion to demonstrate how my model accounts for the listener's classification of given short pieces of text as humorous. Later, in Chapter Five, the use of my model will be illustrated with reference to a longer, unbroken piece of text, namely *Peace* 819-921, allowing the effect on the listener of accumulated details at the micro-level to be taken into account and the difficulties a listener may encounter in classifying Aristophanic text to be considered more fully. But first, to complete the elements necessary to analysing Aristophanes' Greek, I shall discuss the topic of obscenity, in particular its relationship with humour and laughter, in the next section.

Section B: Obscenity

Chapter Three

Obscenity, Humour and Laughter

In the previous chapter we saw that obscenity often plays a rôle in creating humour. For example, one common technique used by Aristophanes to produce humour is the sudden register shift effected by the use of obscene language. One of the objectives of this chapter is to explore more closely the nature of the link between humour and obscenity and to determine what qualities the two share.[1] This chapter will combine historical and ahistorical approaches to the phenomenon of obscenity and will also draw on perspectives from psychoanalysis and humour theory. This includes scholarship on Greek attitudes towards obscenity (as well as attitudes towards humour), and modern examples of the use and occurrence of obscene language which will be adduced to help explain and examine its possible function in the context of Old Comedy.

Henderson's *The Maculate Muse* (1975, revised in 1991), remains the only significant treatment of obscene language in classical Greece and it is this work upon which I shall base much of my discussion. I intend to challenge some of what Henderson says, but largely I shall expand on his ideas as well as those of other scholars whose work is relevant to this field. In so doing I hope to achieve an overview of the approaches which have been used to explain and understand the phenomenon of obscenity with a view to comparing them with theories of humour. In the course of this chapter I shall also put forward some new suggestions concerning the functions and effects of obscenity, intended to supplement those of previous theorists in this area, with particular reference to the use of obscenity on a group. I shall also explore the relationship between laughter, humour and obscenity.

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[1]Regrettably, a certain amount of opprobrium has been attached to obscenity by some scholars, who as a result find the use of obscene words for humorous ends morally questionable, or even wish to deny the capacity of obscene words to cause amusement. For such views see Koestler 1964, 87; Raskin 1985, 160. Even Henderson, it would seem, approves of obscenity only really as a tool of invective. He comments (1991, 29): 'without its function in the humor of abuse and exposure, obscenity becomes mere smut'. Contrast the classic defence of obscenity (as against pornography) by D. H. Lawrence (1936, 170-87: 'Obscenity and Pornography').

Whilst Henderson's work will form the basis of much of my discussion, it is profitable first to consider briefly the work of Bakhtin whose discussion of the medieval carnival in *Rabelais and his World* contains much of relevance to the subject of obscenity.[2] Especially important is Bakhtin's concept of 'degradation', which he articulates in the course of his discussion of folk humour (an important element of the carnivalesque). 'Degradation', he argues, is an essential principle of folk humour, but is also to be found in parody and satire; it is:[3]

> the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract; it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity.

Aside from its intrinsic interest, Bakhtin's definition of degradation will prove a useful supplement to Henderson's views on obscenity, especially given that in the course of his discussion Henderson draws freely on the concept of 'degradation' with neither explanation nor any reference to Bakhtin's work.

Bakhtin's observations about carnival licence may also provide a useful backdrop to the study of Old Comedy. He views the carnival as an inclusive social occasion during which barriers of rank, class and status are put aside and special forms of frank and free gesture and speech are employed, including obscene language. Whilst the festivals during which comedy was performed in classical Athens are certainly not identical to the medieval carnival, it is nevertheless interesting to note the co-occurrence in a community-wide festival of:[4]

> a temporary suspension of all hierarchic distinctions and barriers among men and of certain types of norms and prohibitions of usual life.

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[2]On the relationship between Bakhtin's writings and Aristophanes, see Goldhill 1991, 182-4 (on Carrière, *inter alia*, a copy of whose *Le Carnaval et la politique* (1979) has proven impossible to locate) and von Moellendorff 1995, esp. 73-109, 'die Karnevalisierung der Literatur'. Von Moellendorff summarizes (79): 'die karnevaleske Sprache ist eine Erniedrigung der Normalsprache'.

[3]Bakhtin 1984, 19-20.

[4]Ibid., 15.

Later I shall propose that obscenity and the suspension of these 'hierarchic distinctions and barriers' coincide in Old Comedy too. I shall suggest that their co-occurrence is explicable through the fact that obscene language has the potential of acting as a leveller between individuals.[5]

Henderson and the Definition of Obscenity

The first task that Henderson sets himself in *The Maculate Muse* is that of explaining 'obscenity'. His definition merits quoting at length.[6]

> By 'obscenity' we mean verbal reference to areas of human activity or parts of the human body that are protected by certain taboos agreed upon by prevailing social custom and subject to emotional aversion or inhibition. These are in fact the sexual and excremental areas. In order to be obscene, such a reference must be made by an explicit expression that is itself subject to the same inhibitions as the thing it describes. Thus, to utter one of the numerous words, to be found in any language, which openly (noneuphemistically) describe the tabooed organs or actions is tantamount to exposing what should be hidden.

As can be gleaned from this definition, Henderson's concern is with verbal obscenity alone, just as mine will be in the present chapter. Of course, pictorial representations of tabooed deeds and objects may also be said to be 'obscene', but for the purposes of the present chapter, obscenity, obscene words and taboo words are to be regarded as synonyms.

Henderson goes on to differentiate between our modern concept of obscenity and the Greek concept of what is *aischros* ('shameful'). He argues that whereas we and the Romans have a concept of that which is dirty, staining or polluted (our 'obscene' and the Latin *obscenus*), the Greeks have no such concept, their nearest equivalent being that which invokes *aidôs* ('appropriate shame') and

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[5]Of relevance to the idea of obscenity as a leveller is von Moellendorff's comment (ibid., 81): 'diese Vorstellung vom Volk, in dem das Individuum aufgeht, gewinnt Aktualität vor allem im Fest, in einem Augenblick also, da alle am Fest teilnehmenden Menschen ihr individuelles Leben mit dem ihrer Gruppe verbinden.'

[6]Henderson 1991, 2.

which is therefore *aischros*.[7] Words which are shameful to utter include those which describe shameful deeds or objects. The shame connected with taboo words results from the fact that not only the deeds and objects themselves but also the words which represent those deeds and objects 'stand for what one keeps to oneself',[8] the scope of reference of these words including, most prominently, the sexual or scatological fields. However, as Henderson remarks, in classical Greek 'there was no *special* term' for taboo words.[9]

Medical terms for sexual and scatological phenomena existed alongside, but distinct from, primary obscenities. These terms are also non-euphemistic, just as primary obscenities are, but unlike primary obscenities are used in respectable contexts such as medical treatises. As Henderson argues, 'clinical language' is not 'charged with those strong emotional...feelings about which one is taught to be circumspect in all civilized and social contexts'.[10] As for pairs of words such as φαλλός ('penis') and πέος ('cock'), he suggests that 'the difference lies simply in the quality of the mental picture awakened by each word.'[11] I shall discuss the nature of these different 'mental pictures' later.

Outside comedy there are only two other formalized contexts in which obscene words would have been encountered by a classical Athenian: namely, in the iambic poets (most notably Arkhilokhos and Hipponax) and in the rites connected with certain cults, festivals and celebrations.[12] Henderson sees iambic poetry as a direct precursor of Old Comedy and thus of more relevance to the subject of Old Comedy than the cults. The reason for this conclusion is that he views the iambographers and the comic poets as being attracted to obscenity for the same reason, namely its potential for use as a tool of invective. He comments:[13]

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[7]In fact a major difficulty connected with investigating the place of humour and obscenity in Greek culture arises from the fact that classical Greek had no word corresponding directly to either.

[8]Henderson 1991, 5.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., 35.

[11]Ibid. Cf. Ferenczi 1952, 137-8.

[12]Henderson 1991, 13-14.

[13]Ibid., 17. In the light of comments Henderson makes in the preface to the 1991 edition about adverse reactions in the 1970s to his research, one wonders if it may have been expedient for him only to write about the more noble motives old comic writers may have had for using obscenity.

> it was not merely the uttering of obscene language which appealed to the comic poets; it was the use of obscenity as a means of abuse, criticism, and degradation which attracted them and challenged their ingenuity.

As far as the cults and festivals which employed obscenity are concerned, they were exclusively dedicated either to Demeter or Dionysos.[14] They included the Haloa festival, the Thesmophoria and the Eleusinian Mysteries, all dedicated to Demeter,[15] and various Dionysiac processions.[16]

Types of Obscene Expression

In this section I shall briefly consider the different methods by which obscenity is conveyed to the audience in Old Comedy.

Primary Obscenities: Henderson coins the term 'primary obscenities' to denote non-euphemistic and non-metaphorical terms for the objects or actions they describe; the objects, actions and the words themselves being for the Greeks those to which *aidôs* (appropriate shame) is attached. In classical Greek, such words include κύσθος, 'cunt', πέος, 'cock' or 'dick', and πρωκτός, 'arse-hole'.

Metaphorical Expressions and *Double Entendres*: these two categories of obscenity overlap and are effectively inseparable. It is worth considering briefly how such expressions strike the listener. Like primary obscenities, metaphorical expressions and *double entendres* evoke connotations of that which is *aischros*. Some metaphorical expressions such as ἐρέβινθος ('chickpea' > 'penis') must have struck the listener in a similar way to a primary obscenity: they are well-worn and many no doubt had the status of slang. It is worth remarking that if the listener shows he has understood the meaning of the new word, he admits to a similar knowledge of that which is *aischros* to that which the speaker has displayed.

It is interesting to note that on occasion Aristophanes seems to prepare the audience for the occurrence of primary obscenities by means of *double entendres*.

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[14]For details of such festivals, see ibid., 13ff. and Bremmer 1997, 13.

[15]Cf. the Syracusan Demeter cult of Herodotos 6.19 and the other similar cults detailed at 5.83 on Aegina and 2.60 in Egypt (cult of Isis).

[16]See Henderson 1991, 15ff.

For example, in the *Akharnians* scene where Dikaiopolis is bargaining with the Megarian (750-818), the word χοῖρος is used a number of times - initially to be understood as 'pig', then as a *double entendre* ('pig'/'cunt') - before the unambiguous κύσθος ('cunt') of 782 is introduced.

Obscene Gesture: although lying outside the scope of my discussion, actors' gestures are worthy of mention since they would no doubt have played an important part in the process of conveying obscenity to a play's audience, either as an accompaniment to obscene language or in their own right. In *The Theatre of Aristophanes*, McLeish suggests that any action on stage must have been extremely exaggerated to have been observable by the audience.[17]

Laughter as a Reaction to Obscene Language

One of the objectives of this chapter is to highlight similarities between the ways in which obscenity and humour have been and can be analysed. It is worth reiterating that obscenity often plays a rôle in creating humour. As mentioned above, one way in which obscene language is used by Aristophanes is to contrive a sudden register shift. Alternatively, the uttering of obscenity by a character may be perceived either as stereotypical behaviour or wholly unexpected behaviour of a humorous variety.

Whilst it is true to say that obscenity sometimes plays a rôle in creating humour it is neither the case that humour always involves obscenity nor that all obscenity is to be regarded as humorous. What I should like to focus on briefly, however, is a common reaction to both humour and obscenity, namely laughter.

The use of obscenity can elicit a range of reactions in an individual: it can, for example, shock, anger, amuse (i.e. be thought 'funny' or diverting) or embarrass. What is more, all of these reactions can be feigned.[18] For example, an individual may be amused at the use of obscene language, but because he is in the presence of a child will choose to appear shocked. To be sure, there are various circumstances in which obscene language has the potential of eliciting laughter from an individual, such as when it is perceived as humorous, when it embarrasses, or when either of these reactions is being feigned. It should be

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[17]See ibid., 93-108.

[18]On feigned laughter, see Koestler 1964, 30 and Lafrance 1983.

stressed that whilst embarrassment and amusement *can* elicit laughter they do not *always* do so.[19]

The situations in which humorous stimuli can elicit laughter from an individual have similarities with those in which embarrassment can do so. The level and extent of laughter is determined to a large extent by social factors: for example, a number of studies have shown that subjects tend to laugh more in response to humorous stimuli when in company.[20] An individual's level of embarrassment, and thus whether or not he laughs or how much he laughs at potentially embarrassing stimuli, is no doubt also contingent on whether or not he is in company.[21]

My intention in this section has been briefly to explore the possible reactions to obscene words. I shall return to the subject of laughter later when examining the place it held in Greek thought and the rôle it plays in promoting cohesion and division amongst members of a group.

Humour Theories

It will be useful at this point to reflect on historical and contemporary trends in humour research. Work in this field generally takes as its starting point one of the following questions: 'How is humour constructed?'; 'What rôle does humour play in society?'; or 'What effect does humour have on the individual mind?' Each humour theorist tends to be concerned with answering one of these three questions and, in consequence, it is possible to divide scholarly work in this field neatly into three categories:

(i) Formalist Cognitive Theories,
(ii) Social Theories, and
(iii) Psychological Theories.

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[19]As noted in Chapter 1, we do not always laugh at humorous stimuli.

[20]See, for example, Chapman 1983, who talks of laughter as (148), 'an essentially social response'. Cf. Morreall 1983, 114; Suls 1983, 49; Mulkay 1988, Chapter 6, 'Laughter as Social Action' (93-119) and Hauser et al. 1997, 10. Of course, there may also be reasons why an individual would suppress laughter in company, as discussed above in relation to the feigning of reactions to the use of obscenity.

[21]See Mulkay 1988, ibid., esp. 110-4.

In my brief survey of these three categories, I am following the lead of Attardo, who presents his categorization of humour theories in the following diagram.[22]

Cognitive	Social	Psychological
Incongruity	Hostility	Release
Contrast	Aggression	Sublimation
	Superiority	Liberation
	Triumph	Economy
	Derision	
	Disparagement	

Figure 3: The tripartite division of humour theories, after Attardo

(i) Cognitive/Incongruity Theories

In order to illustrate the work which falls into this category, I shall focus on four prominent theories. Two of the most influential pre-twentieth-century accounts of humour are those of Kant and Schopenhauer, both of whom set themselves the problem of explaining how laughter at humorous stimuli arises. Kant defines laughter as 'an affection arising from sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing', and says that 'the jest must contain something that is capable of deceiving for a moment'. Schopenhauer, similarly, proposes that 'the cause of laughter in every case is the sudden perception of...incongruity'.[23]

In *The Act of Creation* (1964), Koestler's main focus is also on laughter rather than humour. Central to his view of laughter as a reaction to incongruity is the phenomenon of tickling which, he argues, elicits laughter in a similar way

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[22]Attardo 1994, 47: his discussion is to be found at 47-50. Morreall 1983 offers a similar scheme: 'superiority'/'incongruity'/'release'. For a very different breakdown of humour theories see MacHovec 1988, 27-8, whose categorization is more complex, his interest being in tracing the historical development of humour theories. Often theories are hybrids; see e.g. on Koestler n.25 below.

[23]Kant, *The Critique of Judgement* (1790); Schopenhauer, *The World as Will* (1819): cited by Raskin 1985, 31. Both these theories are strongly incongruity-based and are only *cognitive* in a loose sense of the word.

to humour.[24] Prior to language acquisition, babies can be made to laugh by being tickled. This laughter, like laughter at humorous stimuli, is the energy released when a situation conveying a certain amount of threat sees that threat deflated in a non-harmful way.[25] This laughter is the result of a frustrated expectation combined with the vital ingredient of adrenaline.[26] Verbal humour, Koestler adds, is realized by what he terms the 'bisociation of matrices', that is, when two different fields of reference are drawn together at a common point. This element of his theory has similarities with the model of humour which Raskin articulates in *Semantic Mechanisms of Humour* (1985); Raskin calls the two incongruous fields of reference 'scripts' and the drawing together of these 'script opposition'.

Raskin also differentiates between what he calls 'bona fide' and 'non-bona fide' communication. Put simply, bona fide communication is that consisting of the genuine exchange of information, whereas in non-bona fide communication (such as what Raskin calls 'humour', but which I have called discourse in a 'Playful' frame) spurious as well as genuine information is exchanged. When we realize that we are listening to non-bona fide communication, proposes Raskin, we often suspend our disbelief and look for 'script opposition'. This heightened sense of alertness in readiness to respond to unusual use of language is similar to the adrenaline that Koestler suggests is essential to the realization of laughter.

(ii) Social (Hostility) Theories

Hostility theories have their origin in the fact that humour often has a target, that is, what is often called 'the butt of the joke'. Humour can be used aggressively and exclusively; that is, the fact that a group of people are laughing *at* an individual may serve to exclude him from that group. This aggressive use of humour can also be viewed as inclusive, in that the teller of the joke and the audience are aligned alongside one another in opposition to the joke's target.

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[24]See Koestler 1964, 79-81.

[25]To be sure, Koestler could also be classed as a 'social' theorist, since he sees aggression as playing an integral part in eliciting laughter. He comments (1964, 56), 'in a word, laughter is aggression (or apprehension) robbed of its logical *raison d'être*; the puffing away of emotion discarded by thought.'

[26]Ibid., Chapter 2, 'Laughter and Action' (51-63). See esp. 55-58.

Bergson's *Le Rire* (1899), in which he proposes a view of humour as a social corrective, has proven to be a highly influential example of such a theory.[27]

(iii) Psychological (Release) Theories

Release theories focus either on the listener's liberation from the usual rules of language, such as the need for non-ambiguous discourse, or alternatively, his confrontation with, and hence liberation from, the inhibitions or taboos which find expression in jokes and humorous discourse.[28] Humour may also be viewed as a means of releasing tensions or psychic energy. One of the best known arguments of this type is propounded in Freud's *Jokes and Their Relation to the Sub-Conscious* (1905).

The approaches to understanding and explaining the phenomenon of humour detailed in the present section should be borne in mind in the course of the discussion of obscenity which follows since, as we shall see, cognitive, social and incongruity theories will prove helpful for analysing obscenity as well as humour.

Obscenity: Aggression and Intimacy

At the beginning of this chapter, we considered the definition of obscene language provided by Henderson in *The Maculate Muse*, which may be summarized as 'the words for those deeds or objects which are subject to taboo and *aidôs'*. Let us now turn our attention to Henderson's views on the various uses and effects of obscenity. Henderson writes:[29]

> obscenity is most often used to insult someone; to emphasize what one is saying in the most forceful way; to make curses; to add power to comedy, jokes, ridicule or satire. Its efficacy in all these functions

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[27]Bergson's may alternatively be categorized as an incongruity theory.

[28]As Želvys 1990, 328, comments: 'there is reason to consider some kinds of humour as a peculiar means of achieving catharsis, a feeling of freedom and despair...many modern scholars mean [by *catharsis*] the emotion of relaxation acquired with the help of the violent breach of society's most esteemed taboo.'

[29]Henderson 1991, 7.

> resides in its ability to uncover what is forbidden, and thus to shock, anger or amuse. The pleasure afforded by obscenity lies in our enjoyment at exposing someone else or seeing someone else exposed without having to effect the exposure physically.

Henderson plausibly suggests that whilst obscene language can act as an indicator that special attention is demanded for speech in which it is included, it finds use primarily as a kind of verbal violence. He proposes that the major use of obscenity in a civilized society is as a replacement for physical aggression, either hostile or libidinous. Thus obscene language is used to effect personal abuse and what he calls 'exposure' - a concept to be understood by reference to the following model.[30] Henderson argues (and here his argument is less convincing) that by the use of obscene language in an aggressive situation, A forces B to imagine visually what is being said.[31] Thus if A says the word 'cunt', for example, B is forced to picture a cunt. Further to this, B's admission of his recognition of an obscene word's force and meaning throws up questions about his character. If he knows what 'cunt' means, what other obscene things does he know? Henderson adds that if a third party is present, then B's knowledge of the deeds or objects for which obscene words stand is made public, and this is the process which Henderson terms 'exposure'. He further posits that this 'exposure' is pleasurable for everyone but the exposee. Henderson notes that 'very often this exposure is hostile and serves to degrade its object',[32] although whether his use of 'degrade' corresponds to Bakhtin's concept of 'degradation' discussed earlier is unclear. He continues by saying that 'exposure' is on occasion not hostile, but rather serves 'to excite amusement or pleasure in the audience by arousing their sexual feelings',[33] and represents 'a brief and uninhibited release of sexual feelings'.[34] Later I shall examine the way in which an individual's knowledge of that which is private and 'obscene' may be revealed in a non-hostile and non-libidinous way.

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[30]Henderson's treatment of obscenity is essentially Freudian and Ferenczian throughout. For the concept of 'exposure' (Entblößung), see Freud 1960, 97-8 and passim.

[31]Henderson 1991, 10 and 36-8, an idea which is Freudian in origin: Freud 1960, 97-8 and passim; cf. Ferenczi 1952, 137. As one who does not picture words, I find this aspect of Henderson's model untenable. His model is none the less plausible, however, if this aspect is removed. For a critique of the visualizing fallacy in literary interpretation, see Furbank 1970, esp. Chapter 1 (1-24).

[32]Henderson 1991, 8.

[33]Ibid., 8.

[34]Ibid., 9.

Henderson stresses that for a classical Athenian no concept of guilt would have accompanied the use of obscene language, such as the Romans might have felt or such as we might nowadays feel owing to the influence of Christian (or Victorian) morality.[35] He argues instead that the use of obscene language would have generated *aidôs* (appropriate shame) in a listener which would result in a feeling of invasion of privacy should such language be used outside the sanction of the comic (or other) festivals.[36] One context in which obscene language is often permissibly used to invade privacy (partially, at least) is intimacy. Henderson, however, fails to discuss this in any detail.[37]

In our society, one of the common circumstances in which we find obscene language used is amongst good friends.[38] What is more, taboo words can play a rôle in defining a social group, a quality which they share, incidentally, with items of slang, with which obscenity might usefully be compared. Key to the use of slang in the context of a group's definition is that the knowledge of a given word's meaning is limited to a particular class of people, the boundaries of which are commonly determined either geographically or by a factor such as age, social class or profession. Just as by correct comprehension or use of a slang expression an individual can signal his membership of a social group, so can his correct use or comprehension of an obscene word betray a certain disposition, namely that he is prepared to tolerate direct references to the private sphere.[39] Primary obscenities find use in both an individual's affirmation of his membership of a group and also in his initiation into it: the group may be joined as long as he agrees not to be offended by the use of obscene language. As an individual I might tolerate the use of obscene language from a friend, but would be upset at its use by a stranger, since obscene words usually refer to things that are acceptable in a limited private sphere, such as sex or defecation, but which are unacceptable in the public sphere. For a close acquaintance to refer to our

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[35]Ibid., 2-8. *Pace* Reckford 1983, 506 n.5.

[36]At 1991, 5, Henderson suggests that, 'one would no more say πέος at a dinner party than actually expose himself' (*sic*).

[37]At ibid., 32, Henderson mentions that obscenity was normally limited to 'the most private contexts'.

[38]Bakhtin 1984, 16 suggests that, 'when two persons establish friendly relations, the form of their verbal intercourse also changes abruptly; they address each other informally, abusive words are used affectionately, and mutual mockery is permitted'. See also Fine 1983, 165, on 'joking relationships' among good friends.

[39]Presumably his comprehension or use of *obscene* slang would indicate both.

private domain may be permissible, but for our private domain to be made public, or for a stranger to make our private domain public by the use of obscene (that is, private) language, represents transgression. Our membership of a group which tolerates the use of obscene language indicates in particular (unlike non-obscene slang) that we are prepared to share a certain intimacy with the group's other members.[40]

When used among a group of intimates obscenity can act as a leveller between its members. Each member of the group, through his acceptance of the use of taboo words, makes a tacit admission to the basic bodily urges and functions common to everyone. To use Henderson's term, each member experiences a form of 'exposure' - albeit of a non-violent, non-libidinous kind - and what is more, he sees other members of the group 'exposed'. Through their free use of obscenities even, members of the group can show themselves to be wholly uninhibited concerning their bodily urges and bodily functions. In Bakhtin's terminology, obscenity 'degrades' - it strips away the politenesses involved in the social contract. Members of a group in which obscenity is used come to view the world (temporarily at least) in a 'degraded' aspect. If a member of such a group appears uncomfortable at the use of obscene language he shows himself to be ashamed of his bodily functions. Consequently, should an individual be confronted with a situation where he is forced to choose between on the one hand accepting the use of obscene language or on the other balking at it, his choice (notwithstanding that it may be made subconsciously) is between declining to recognize his urges publicly and an admission of the sham of social niceties. That is, he declines to recognize his bodily urges and functions if he shows discomfort at the obscenities, or alternatively he admits the sham of social niceties if he is prepared to accept their use. Amongst friends there may more easily be a mutual recognition of the sham of social niceties, and explicit admission of the existence of bodily urges and the human dependence on bodily functions.

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[40]The comments of Pollio 1983, 217, are apposite here: 'Since inhibiting social forces are experienced as more confining in the context of strangers than in the context of friends...it is reasonable to expect that comedians and peers who deal in the taboo will produce less laughter (and be less appreciated) in a group of strangers than in a group of friends. Within the context of strangers, the person may even feel embarrassed and find the situation aversive rather than pleasant. The situation is quite different for a group of friends. Here, the degree of social constraint is experienced as less powerful and the tendency to respond to a taboo joke or remark a good deal easier.'

To summarize, an individual may find the use of obscenity from an intimate acceptable, but not from a stranger. In a social situation an individual's toleration or use of obscenity can gain him access into, or affirm his membership of, a group. Obscenity can effect a non-violent and non-libidinous 'exposure' of an individual and can act as a social leveller amongst those who use or tolerate it. Obscenity can cause the world and those who populate it to be seen in a 'degraded' state: each man is seen not as an intellect or elevated soul but as a body that shits and fucks.[41]

Let us now see how the model proposed can be used to understand better the possible effects on an audience of Aristophanes' use of obscenity. Whilst the potential of obscene language to be cohesive and levelling in the context of a social group is no doubt relevant in this respect, it is inappropriate either to equate 'social group' with 'audience' or to apply my model without qualification to the ancient spectators of an Aristophanic play. There are certainly differences between an individual's rôle in a theatre audience and in a social group, probably the most striking being the level of interaction he is afforded. In a social group he has a certain amount of control over the topic and tone of conversation, whereas as a member of a theatre audience he has little or none.[42] Nevertheless, there are important respects in which a comic audience and a social group are similar. In a *polis*-wide festival, other members of the audience will be known to the spectator: indeed, he may even be sitting alongside friends or acquaintances.[43] His reactions to the play and the obscenities therein would be public - not only is other spectators' laughter audible but also there was not the darkness of the modern theatre to obscure the other audience members' reactions. What is more, the conventions of theatrical self-referentiality in Old Comedy meant that the audience as a whole and audience members individually were referred to in the course of the play, engaging them in the play's action and

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[41]One recalls the sentiment Lawrence has Mellors express in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (Chapter 15): 'An' if tha shits an' if tha pisses, I'm glad. I don't want a woman as couldna shit nor piss.'

[42]I stop short of saying that the audience member is always passive in this respect, since laughter, heckling (and the mobile 'phone) pierce even the modern production. What is more, other eras tolerated far more audience interruption than our own, as do other modern cultures. I am thinking especially of the applause that permeated the first performance of Beethoven's Ninth or the encores of arias or even the whole performance of certain operas in the last century. Audience moods and responses are also said by actors to influence their performance. On stage/audience interaction in Old Comedy, see Taplin 1986, esp. 166 and 172-3.

[43]Longo 1990, 13, stresses the 'communitarian character of the Athenian theater public in the classical period'.

placing them within the range of the actors' speech in a way certainly more typical of conversation than, say, is the case with tragic dialogue.[44]

In the context of the comic festival the use of obscene language was both usual and expected. Thus there is no reason to suppose that members of Aristophanes' audience would have found the obscene language in his plays unacceptable: they may have felt amusement at their use but not shock, anger, outrage or even embarrassment. Each audience member is tacitly invited to view the world in a 'degraded' state and to acknowledge not only his own dependence on bodily urges or functions but also that of his fellow spectator. What is more, this tacit acknowledgement takes place by daylight in full view of his fellow spectators.

There are ways in which audience members' subjection to obscene language may have had the potential of binding them together as a group. In the comic performance the use of taboo words effects something similar to what Henderson would term an 'exposure' of each spectator, who in turn sees his fellow-spectators 'exposed'. However, this 'exposure' is non-violent and non-libidinous; that is, of a kind which only usually occurs between intimates and which is thus usually experienced as cohesive. In addition, this violation of the boundary between public and private is forced on the audience as a whole - in witnessing this transgression together they have undergone a common experience, potentially a unifying force in itself. During the comic performance obscenity may, then, have realized its potential for effecting social cohesion. Moreover, I suggest that this sense of cohesion could be reinforced by a common reaction to obscenity's use, that is, laughter, a subject to which I shall now turn my attention.

In his article, 'The Uses of Laughter in Greek Culture' (1991), Halliwell examines Greek attitudes towards laughter in the archaic and classical periods. He separates what he calls 'playful' laughter from 'consequential' laughter.[45] His discussion mainly concerns the latter kind which is to be understood as harmful,

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[44]See Taplin 1986, esp. 166-7 and 173. Taplin 1996, 193, comments on the rapport that comic choruses set up with the audience. Segal 1996, 149, 157 and 164 stresses the communality of even the tragic audience.

[45]These two categories no doubt reflect Freud's division of jokes into *tendenzös* ('purposive'/tendentious') and *harmlos* ('innocent') (Freud 1960).

derisive laughter, potentially shaming for its target.[46] Laughter is often represented in our sources as hybristic and aggressive and as having the power to effect social ostracism. Such laughter is viewed as a potent, dangerous tool. Thersites' inappropriate scoffing at Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, for example, is potentially 'consequential'; but 'the ugliest man that ever came to Troy' has the tables turned on him since he himself becomes the object of 'consequential', ostracizing laughter at the hands of Odysseus (*Il.* 2.211-77). Plato distinguishes between laughter which is ἄνευ θυμοῦ (Halliwell's 'playful') and μετὰ θυμοῦ (Halliwell's 'consequential') in the *Laws* (11.935d-6a) when discussing what can be tolerated by the laws of the city.

We shall return to this dangerous side of Greek laughter later, but for the time being I wish to focus briefly on what Halliwell calls 'playful' laughter. In contrasting this with 'consequential' laughter, Halliwell seems erroneously to imply that 'playful' laughter is to be considered *in*consequential. His paradigm of 'playful' laughter is an outburst that occurs in book one of the *Iliad* (1.595-600) where Hephaistos checks a quarrel amongst the gods by making himself the subject of laughter (he hobbles around in the palace, δώματα, acting the servant and pouring wine for the other gods). Halliwell comments briefly:[47]

> The behaviour of the Olympians exemplifies the conception of laughter as a mechanism of release or relaxation.

Owing, however, to the focus of his article, Halliwell fails to develop this line of thought. Let it be noted that there are a number of examples of 'relaxing' laughter attested in early and classical Greece, perhaps the most cited being one in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, where Demeter's silence and fast, brought about by her grief for her missing daughter, is broken by the old crone Iambe telling her a number of jokes (πολλὰ παρασώπτουσ':203).[48] Halliwell concentrates on

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[46]As far as the earlier division of humour theories is concerned, the Greek view of laughter would certainly be classified as a 'social' theory. On types of Greek laughter, see Lateiner 1977, 173-4; cf. also de Vries 1985 on laughter in Plato (which is often 'malicious') and Edwards 1991, 169ff. on the 'Σκῶμμα Negative and Positive', esp. 173, where he summarizes philosophical attitudes towards 'joking'.

[47]Halliwell 1991, 282.

[48]Clear examples of non-aggressive laughter are not numerous in our sources, but nevertheless exist: At Xen. *Cyr.* 5.2.18 we meet laughter which is explicitly non-aggressive (albeit amongst Kyros' men and not Greeks). Hektor and Andromakhe's laughter at Astyanax is not easy to construe as 'aggressive' (*Il.* 6.466-71), nor is Zeus' comforting gentle (ἡδύ) laughter at Leto (*Il.*

the Greek preoccupation with laughter as aggressive and exclusive but there is also a stream of thought in Greek culture recognized by Halliwell himself which sees laughter as relaxing and potentially inclusive and cohesive, as exemplified by the two instances just cited. I suggest that whilst the Greeks of the classical and archaic eras were all too aware of laughter's potential for exclusion, they were also conscious of its ability to relax, integrate and include. Even the instances of aggressive laughter on which Halliwell concentrates can be said to display inclusiveness to an extent, since, as I highlighted earlier in my discussion of 'social' theories of humour, the teller of the joke and his audience are aligned alongside one another in opposition to the joke's target: this is exemplified well by the laughter roused by Odysseus against Thersites in the *Iliad*. Indeed, laughter's inclusiveness and exclusiveness are often two sides of the same coin: in the Hephaistos incident, for example, the hobbling god could be said to have made himself the 'target' of the laughter.

Earlier it was suggested that obscenity can play a rôle in the cohesion of a social group and can act as a leveller between its members - functions which it may have fulfilled to a greater or lesser extent for the audience of Aristophanes' plays. Now it is clear that laughter too was perceived in the classical era as having a capacity for inclusion. Laughter was doubtless invited in response to the obscenity, the humour and, of course, the obscene humour of Aristophanes' plays. I suggest that whilst both the obscenity and the humour of the plays had their targets (and thus acted *ex*clusively), the laughter elicited also aided the relaxation and cohesion of the audience (and thus acted *in*clusively).

One further point may be made. In the context of the comic festival, inhibiting factors preventing enjoyment of obscene language would have been minimal or non-existent and it would have been open to the audience to laugh freely in reaction to its use (which is of course why it is appropriate to concentrate on amusement rather than shock or anger as a reaction to obscene language). As Henderson points out,[49] there was no Greek concept of a word being staining or polluting, merely a sense that its use was only appropriate in certain contexts; and the comic festival *was* just such a sanctioned and special occasion. This said, let us remember that laughter is merely one of a range of possible reactions both to the use of obscene language and to humour, and that it can also be elicited by other stimuli, both physical and cognitive.

21.508). For Platonic examples of non-aggressive laughter, see de Vries 1985, passim, and Brock 1990, 45-6.

[49]Henderson 1991, 3-6.

Other Functions of Obscenity

There are other functions attributable to obscenity.[50] Henderson suggests that the hostile and libidinous 'exposures' represented on stage can be viewed as effecting a form of 'catharsis' for the audience, since private urges are given public release. He writes:[51]

> Such exposures in real life would have been considered unacceptable aggression, but placed on the stage they became permissible channels for the audience's sexual aggressiveness, a kind of catharsis of sexual feelings and a kind of wish fulfilment.

In addition to this, Henderson summarizes (and in minor ways adds to) the models for understanding the psychogenesis of obscenity formulated by Freud and Ferenczi.[52] These propose, plausibly, that to explain the unique power of obscene words, it is necessary to understand the processes involved in a child's early development. At a pre-verbal stage the child thinks in concrete, pre-abstract images. During this stage the child also experiences his first sexual and scatological pleasures. The child's acquisition of language allows him to develop a capability for abstract thought, a process which is contemporaneous with his learning society's taboos. The child, then, learns to express himself in a socially acceptable manner and not to make direct mention of life's tabooed areas. Obscene words, however, refer directly to tabooed objects and actions and allow him in later life to experience them again in a concrete, pre-abstract form. Obscene words are, in Henderson's words, 'simply equals-signs cutting through social barriers and pointing directly toward, and invoking in the listener, the basic emotions adhering to the organs and actions themselves'; 'their unique power lies in their ability to recall to us a pleasurable time of life, regression to

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[50]For a brief and pertinent survey of 'Some Functions of Sexual Language in Latin', see Adams 1982, 4-8: he lists four categories: 'apotropaic and ritual obscenity'; 'aggression and humiliation'; 'humour and aggressiveness' and 'titillation'.

[51]Henderson 1991, 33. On Henderson's use of 'catharsis' here, see n.28 above.

[52]Ibid., 36-9, summarizing Ferenczi 1952, 137-53 and Freud 1960. For discussion and bibliography, see Richlin 1983, 230 n.19.

which is a function of our occasional need to rebel against the repressions enforced by adulthood.'[53]

Obscenity Analysable in a Similar Way to Humour

As outlined earlier, the three categories into which modern theories of humour usually fall are: Formalist Cognitive/Incongruity Theories; Social (Hostility) Theories and Psychological (Release) Theories. Let us now spell out how analyses of obscenity may also be categorized under these three headings.

Cognitive/Incongruity Theories: In the last chapter I discussed how a listener may perceive obscenities as humorous through their being incongruous. Instead or in addition, obscene words can cause a listener to feel embarrassment. This can also be viewed as a reaction to obscene language as incongruous, since obscenity elicits this response in a listener when it is used in an inappropriate context, that is, in a public rather than a private capacity.

Social (Hostility) Theories: When humour is used in a hostile way - when it has a butt - it can be viewed in a similar way to a zero-sum competition, i.e. one in which there is a winner and a loser. In the context of a social group the loser - the butt of the joke - can suffer exclusion from the group (at least temporarily), whereas the originator of the humour and the other members of the group who

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[53]Henderson 1991, 38. Another feature of obscenity which has raised comment is its apotropaic nature. Obscenity was often used in other festivals and celebrations to insult an individual and thus to divert the envy of the gods away from him (See ibid., 13 ff., esp. 18 and Bakhtin 1984, 16). Such is the case with the αἰσχρολογία connected with various cults. This apotropaic use of obscenity was a feature of Roman institutions too, such as the *Fescannine Iocatio*, a typical feature of the Roman wedding (found, for example, at Catullus 61.120: see also Adams 1982, 4-6). The apotropaic benefits of the obscenity in Old Comedy presumably lies in its benefit to the city of Athens' public figures who are so regularly the victims of 'exposure' in Aristophanes' plays. This is not to say, though, that individuals would appreciate being 'exposed'! Henderson 1990, 307, comments that Old Comedy provided 'a yearly unofficial review of [public figures'] conduct'. The comic festival may also reasonably be viewed as a sanctioned occasion which afforded the citizens of Athens a temporary release from the normal constraints of everyday life in the city (*inter alia*, see Halliwell 1991, esp. 292 and 295-6; *pace* Reckford 1987, 15). In regard to obscenity, it was an occasion when taboo words could find use, when that which was normally most private found a public voice.

identify with him may be brought closer together.[54] Both the exclusive and the inclusive functions of humour may be reinforced by the use of laughter.[55]

The model plausibly articulated by Henderson sees obscenity as working in a very similar way: the loser is 'exposed' by the use of obscenity directed towards him, whereas the winner effects the 'exposure', which is enjoyed by both him and any onlookers. The process I have outlined - by which obscenity can help to create the cohesion of a group - can also be viewed as a 'social' theory. What is more, on another analysis of obscenity the 'loser' can be viewed as benefiting owing to the atropaic nature of obscenities and insults. Thus the target of obscenities and the 'butt of the joke', in the context of the festival at least, can both be viewed as having the envy of the gods directed away from them. In Aristophanes' plays the real-life subjects of both humorous and obscene abuse are most frequently the public figures of the city of Athens.

Psychological(Release) Theories: Obscene words refer directly to those actions and objects which are subject to taboo in a culture. Their use can be instrumental in effecting liberation from social conventions.[56] Those very tabooed areas which are often more easily referred to by humorous rather than non-humorous discourse are those to which obscenities directly refer.[57] According to Freudian/Ferenczian analysis: (i) obscenity may even be said to liberate the individual from the constraints of and need for abstract, verbal thought, and (ii) obscene words recall an earlier stage of our development when the world is experienced in a concrete way, free from taboo.

In the light of the similarities between the ways in which humour and obscenity may be analysed and their potential uses and functions, it is perhaps unsurprising that there are a number of contexts in classical Athens where the two are found together, very often in conjunction with laughter. Let us conclude

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[54]Zajdman 1992, 361, talks of humour's ability to 'reinforce intragroup cohesiveness or reinforce personal ties'. See also Fine 1983, 173.

[55]See Martineau 1972 on aggressive uses of humour, who investigates the ways in which humour can, amongst other things, 'solidify' an in-group or alternatively 'foster conflict' and its 'demoralization and social disintegration'.

[56]Not only may humorous discourse be used to broach taboo subjects, but humour can also, according to Feinberg 1975, offer us (204), 'escape from the incessant logic which overwhelms us.'

[57]On which see Schultz 1977, 66. He comments, 'the violation of taboos in humour provides a cathartic release from civilization and its discontents.' On this point, see also Dolitsky 1992, 37.

this section with a brief analysis of the nexus of humour-obscenity-laughter in Greek culture.

First, it is interesting to note that Halliwell's 'consequential' laughter would appear to have much in common with the concept of 'exposure' proposed by Henderson. Indeed, it is rewarding to compare the way in which obscenity and humour may realize their potential for aggression. The processes appear identical. Just as by the use of obscenity an individual can effect the 'exposure' of another person in front of a third party, so an individual can cause embarrassment or shame by the use of laughter aroused by non-obscene stimuli. Such is the 'consequential' laughter roused in Book Two of the *Iliad*, for example, when Odysseus derides Thersites, and such is the laughter which Ariston accuses Konon and his sons of employing in Demosthenes' *Against Konon* (8-13; discussed at length by Halliwell).[58]

The power of laughter - be it roused by humour, obscenity or other stimuli such as mockery - was regarded as so strong that, Halliwell argues, it 'calls for means of control'.[59] Halliwell suggests that in some states this control might even have taken the form of legal restrictions.[60] Whilst laughter was often subject to prohibition and censure, there were of course also socially sanctioned situations in which laughter was expected, tolerated and even encouraged.[61] The situations where the complex of laughter, humour and obscenity were found together were the symposium, the *kômos* and certain festivals (both civic and local). Of these Halliwell comments:[62]

> These contexts have in common a distance or detachment from normal, everyday affairs, and, in certain areas, a suspension of usual standards of behaviour. Some major festivals in particular provide, in this respect, opportunities for a politically and socially endorsed relaxation of inhibitions and 'censorship'; they give an established and organized place to laughter, creating the space in which its indulgence can be recognized as legitimate and playful.

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[58]Halliwell 1991, 287-8.

[59]Or as Bremmer 1997, 13, puts it, 'humour could be dangerous, and its place in culture had to be limited to strictly defined occasions.'

[60]Halliwell 1991, 288.

[61]Moral objections to laughter and humour are not restricted to ancient Greece: see Morreall 1983, 85-9, who cites various examples of laughter's censure in other eras, including our own.

[62]Halliwell 1991, 290.

On the one hand, the special dispensation which accompanies the occurrence of laughter, humour and obscenity is granted by the community at large and its traditions - such is the case for the comic festivals, for example. On the other hand, this dispensation is afforded by the intimate nature of a situation - this is the case for the *kômos* and the symposium, where a close-knit social group tolerates and even encourages their use. In line with my earlier argument I would suggest that the audience of the comic festival may have been infected by the intimacy more specifically associated with other situations in which not only obscenity but also laughter and humour were characteristic.

We have already discussed the capacity of obscenity to promote social cohesion and the rôle of laughter in this process. Let us now examine the use of laughter once more, this time in connection with the rôle it plays in *humour*'s ability to promote social cohesion.

Earlier we saw that the knowledge of the meaning of an obscene word or item of obscene slang may be limited to a sub-section of a given group. For example, an adult may know the meaning of an obscene word, whereas a child may not. Similarly, in the case of humour, an individual may need to be in possession of a piece of restricted knowledge to 'get the joke': this occurs especially in the case of topical humour or much humour concerning named individuals (the kind of humour, it should be noted, of which Old Comedy is full).[63] Of course, there are numerous pieces of information the knowledge of which is restricted, but what is distinctive about an individual's knowledge leading to his perceiving humour (or obscenity) is that he is wont to react by laughter, a clear, audible signal. Hence the significant rôle played by laughter in aiding a group's (or sub-group's) cohesion and/or its division: those who are or pretend to be in the know may, by their laughter, be easily demarcated from those who are not.[64]

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[63]Not that humour in Old Comedy concerning named individuals need necessarily be taken at face value: see Halliwell 1984, passim, who warns against (88), 'an assumption that Aristophanic satire accurately reproduces the historical truth about individuals'.

[64]Our conscious or subconscious desire to prove we are 'in the know' may even explain, in part, why we tend to laugh more in company. Chapman 1983, 135, comments, 'laughter can reveal group allegiances, communicate attitudes, and help in establishing and reaffirming dominance in a status hierarchy.'

In addition to its rôle in enabling an individual to avow his knowledge of a restricted piece of information, laughter is considered by many scholars to have in and of itself, a 'cohesive effect'. In *Taking Laughter Seriously* (1983), for example, Morreall claims for group laughter many of the potential effects which I earlier argued could be brought about by a group's toleration of obscenity. For example he claims:[65]

> To laugh with another person for whatever reason, even if only at a piece of absurdity, is to get closer to that person. Indeed, humour can even be directed at the laughers themselves, and still have this unifying effect.... To joke with others is to put aside practical considerations for the moment, and doing this tends to make everyone relax.

Laughter's infectious nature is no doubt also both a symptom and a cause of its ability to unify and act on a group.[66]

Other scholars also seem to credit laughter with similar functions to those ascribed to humour and obscenity. Eibl-Eibesfeldt, for example, writing from the perspective of an ethologist, agrees that laughter can aid cohesion (and that it occurs more readily in a group), but also stresses its exclusive aspect. He claims that laughter:[67]

> bonds those who laugh together but is targeted toward another party (present or simply imagined). We laugh about something, usually together with others.

Before this 'synkrisis' of humour and obscenity is brought to a close, one further common quality ought to be mentioned, namely that both look to the material world over the intellectual, the body over the mind. As Bakhtin says, 'laughter degrades and materializes' (and this is true of laughter roused by either humour or obscenity), a sentiment echoed by numerous scholars.[68] Certainly, as

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[65]Morreall 1983, 115. See also Silk 1988, 25, on the ability of 'comedy' to promote 'co-operative solidarity' in its audience.

[66]Morreall 1983, 115, posits, 'laughter is not only contagious, but in spreading from person to person, it has a cohesive effect. Laughing together unites people.' See also Taplin 1996, 190.

[67]Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989, 446.

[68]Bakhtin 1984, 20. Silk 1988, 28, comments, 'comedy tends towards the material and away from the metaphysical' and quotes Brecht and Kierkegaard on this issue, as well as the following gem

will be reiterated in the next chapter, humour's main provenance in Greek literature is the same 'lower' genres to which the occurrence of obscenity is mainly restricted, namely comedy and iambic poetry.

Not only are there striking similarities between the ways in which humour and obscenity have been and can be analysed; humour and obscenity also occupied a similar position in Greek thought. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, it is of course the case that obscenity and humour are distinct phenomena. Certainly in Greek culture the provenance of the two is not identical, though there is an overlap.[69] Humour is to be found in a number of forms in a number of authors whereas the occurrence of obscene words is notoriously limited.[70] Obscenity may well have found use in private, sexual contexts whereas humour did not, or did so infrequently, but at this we can only guess.[71] By highlighting their similarities, however, I hope to have demonstrated how appropriate it is that they should be found alongside each other and to have offered at least a partial explanation for their co-occurrence in Old Comedy and elsewhere. What is more, in focusing on the capacity of humour and obscenity, accompanied by laughter, to promote social cohesion, my investigation has, I believe, identified a significant dynamic of the audience of Old Comedy.[72]

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from Woody Allen (*Getting Even*, London 1973): 'not only is there no God, but try getting a plumber on weekends'.

[69]There were various public situations in which humour found use in classical Athens, such as the barbershop and the dinner party (Bremmer 1997, passim), in which we have no evidence of obscenity being used. Bremmer also notes, 18-23, the growth in the fourth century of prohibitions concerning humour and laughter.

[70]Humour was, for example, a feature of rhetoric: see Halliwell 1991, 293, who cites Arist. *Rhet.* 1419b2-5.

[71]Henderson, too, suggests (1991, 33), 'the place to enjoy and discuss sexuality was the privacy of one's home, or the brothel, or the symposium, in the company of friends of the same sex.'

[72]If the comic festivals are to be regarded as Dionysiac in a Seafordian sense, the occurrence of the nexus obscenity/humour/laughter in the festival may be viewed as particularly appropriate. To simplify Seaford's views (as expressed, for example, at ib. 1996, 44-52), the cults and rituals of Dionysos and Demeter play a key rôle in reaffirming *polis*-tic values. A typical facet of Dionysiac cult is the cohesion of its participants and their temporary removal from conventional social *mores* - a cohesion achieved by means of an outside agent. For Maenads, for example, alcohol and frenzy typically alter the state of mind of the devotees: a group (in this case a *thyrsos*) is bound by common feelings (frenzy and drunkenness) which effect in the members of that group a temporary alteration in their value systems. These alterations, if effected permanently, would no doubt be detrimental to the *polis*: women leave the *oikos* and the city walls and eat uncooked

In this chapter, I hope to have provided a wide-ranging treatment of the subject of obscenity. My approach will no doubt have appeared eclectic, drawing as it does on different fields of scholarship. A major reason why it has been necessary to make use of these fields is the lack of research devoted solely to obscenity. With notable exceptions, there is a tendency for scholars to touch on the subject only briefly in the course of their treatment of another subject, as in the case of humour theorists or the early psychoanalysts. With the present investigation I hope to have made a modest contribution to redressing this balance by placing obscenity, its functions and effects at the centre of this discussion.

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flesh; they become drunk and speak freely of their desires. Similarly, obscenity and humour may be viewed as outside agents. As a result of their use, people talk freely about their bodily functions and sexual urges, merging their private existence with their public; they lose their sense of *aidôs*; they unleash hostile and libidinous urges, and they strengthen their sense of cohesion as a group.

Section C: Aristophanes

Chapter Four

Textual Analysis

In this chapter I shall outline a system of textual analysis which will be used for examining Aristophanic verse. In a previous chapter I have explored the mechanisms behind a listener's intuitive classification of text into four modes of discourse - the serious mode, humorous mode, paradoxical mode and nonsense mode - showing how such a classification might illuminate short extracts of text. In the next chapter I shall analyse in detail a continuous piece of Aristophanic verse, *Peace* 819-921, in terms of the methodology articulated in this chapter. A systematic textual analysis will allow all possible factors affecting a listener's classification of text to be taken into account. Thus I shall demonstrate my model of textual classification in use whilst highlighting the specific problems encountered by a listener with regard to Aristophanic text. This analysis will also consider the rôle and use of obscenity in the passage.

Many of the factors affecting a listener's modal classification of Aristophanic text are no doubt extra-verbal: with any text written for performance, details such as timing, delivery, gesture and setting play an important rôle. Stage actions can often be guessed from a close reading of the text,[1] but whilst I shall occasionally refer to extra-verbal considerations, my discussion will essentially be confined to verbal humour.

The kind of feature which will be highlighted by my analysis is the often discussed Aristophanic technique of 'collision':[2] the juxtaposition of

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[1]That in tragedy 'the significant stage instructions are implicit in the words' (28) is the central thesis of Taplin 1977, who adds (31 n.1), 'generally speaking the same is true of Greek comedy also, though not so rigidly'. On the differences between a text's 'invariant and repeatable' *form* and its *substance* (the latter being the text's realization in either speech or writing), see Fowler 1966b, 8-9.

[2]A term borrowed from Silk 1993, 481 and passim, and originating in Firth 1957, 194-5. Collision has much in common with what the Prague School called 'foregrounding' (*aktualisace*) - the employment of deviant language against a background of normal language - a feature common to literature and jokey (i.e. 'Playful') speech. See Leech 1966, 144-5 and

words and phrases of different registers as in Trygaios' lyric of *Peace* 864-9. Here, in the phrase ὄχημα κανθάρου, the tragic use of ὄχημα plus the genitive collides with the everyday lexeme κανθάρου. Furthermore, this quasi-paratragic phrase further collides with the obscene *double entendre* κινεῖν at 869. Examples of collision will be encountered elsewhere in the passage from the *Peace* and the effects of such use of language on a listener's classification of text will be considered. The result of this technique often is that the boundaries between serious-mode and humorous-mode discourse become blurred for the listener. The listener intuitively becomes aware of whether the speaker of a given text is violating or merely stretching the frame or the maxims of speech.[3] Difficulties encountered in classifying the text may well have a defamiliarizing effect on the listener: these may unsettle him and/or heighten his awareness of the subtleties and richness of the language used.[4] In analysing the passage, I shall emphasize the way in which the text changes tone throughout and stress the implications this holds for textual classification.

It is instructive to look briefly at some examples of collision from English poetry so that its effects on us, the readers, may be examined. Although the examples of English poetry I have chosen are very different in

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Garvin 1964, esp. viii-ix, 9 and 18. See also Dover 1997, 21. Horace's *callidae iuncturae* will be thought of as forming a subset of collisions: Hor. *AP* 46-8, *in verbis etiam tenuis cautusque serendis/ dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum/ reddiderit iunctura novum.*

[3]Stretching occurs when the listener, whilst not having thoroughly understood what has been said, nonetheless accepts that what he has heard was unitary discourse. Violation occurs when the listener no longer judges the text to be unitary discourse. On this distinction, see p.24-5 of my discussion on humour (Chapter 1).

[4]Bers 1984 , 13, suggests the theory of the 'pedestrian gloss': a listener construes an unusual expression by subconsciously replacing it with a 'functional equivalent' - an expression with which he is more familiar. These functionally different expressions he dubs 'differentiae'. He later comments, 193, 'the differentiae heighten the sense of unpredictability in language. To notice that language is unpredictable is to be highly conscious of the code as something different from the message.' See, however, Ricoeur 1977, Study 3: 'Metaphor and the Semantics of Discourse', esp. 83-90, where he offers a critique of the 'substitution theory' of metaphor. See also Timpanaro 1976, esp. chs 1-3 on 'banalization' (21): 'the substitution of one word by another whose meaning is actually or apparently the same, but whose usage is more familiar to the copyist'.

kind from the Aristophanic passage to be analysed, the phenomenon of collision is nonetheless common to both.

The first extract is the beginning of the first stanza of John Betjeman's *Harrow-on-the-Hill*.

When melancholy Autumn comes to Wembley
  And Electric trains are lighted after tea
The poplars near the Stadium are trembly
  With their tap and tap and whispering to me

Let us look at the first three lines in detail, since they display a number of instances of collision between high- and low-register items of diction. In line 1, 'melancholy Autumn' sounds slightly old-fashioned, even austere in tone,[5] and thus sets up expectations of high register which are frustrated by the occurrence of the prosaic 'Wembley'. In line 2 the item 'electric train' is prosaic and thus collides with the more elevated 'lighted' - this use of 'lighted', where 'lit' would be expected, looks like a pastiche of the technique, common enough in earlier poetry, where an unusual verb form or unusual word order is employed.[6] By line 3 the listener is prepared for collisions, but even so, the contrast between the high sequence of 'lighted...poplars' and the comic coinage 'trembly' is no doubt more striking than any collision met by the listener so far (with added attention being thrown onto 'trembly' through its use as a rhyme for 'Wembley').[7]

My second example is the first stanza of Philip Larkin's *Church Going*:

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[5]The reader may well be put in mind of Keats' *To Autumn* and *Ode to Melancholy*.

[6]Whether the past participle 'lighted' would have struck Betjeman's *original* audience as archaic is difficult to say: 'lighted' and 'lit' seem to have been alternative forms since at least the sixteenth century, with 'lighted' used more commonly until the end of the nineteenth century if the samples of usage in the OED are representative (s. v. light v.[2]). Whether a native speaker at the time of the poem's publication (1954) would have thought 'lighted' common-or-garden, hyper-correct, or archaic/poetic may well have depended on factors such as his age and education.

[7]The coinage of 'trembly' is very much in the spirit of Ogden Nash: two parallels from Nash's collection *Family Reunion* are 'cranberry-jellied-y' (of children's fingers) from *Piano Tuner, Untune me That Tune,* and from *Lines Embroidered on a Bib*, 'So spinach was too spinachy/For Leonardo da Vinaci'.

Once I am sure there's nothing going on
I step inside, letting the door thud shut.
Another church: matting, seats, and stone,
And little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off
My cycle-clips in awkward reverence.

The tone of this stanza is mainly conversational: 'going on...another church...little books...brass and stuff', and this low register collides with the expectations set up by the text's status as a poem and its subject matter. The reference to the church's chancel as its 'holy end' epitomizes the stanza's tone, which is thrown into relief by phrases such as 'sprawlings of flowers' and 'tense, musty, unignorable silence' which would not be out of place in modernist high-register poetry, in the tradition of, say, Eliot's *Four Quartets*.[8] More low-register features are found towards the end of the stanza: the bathetic *double entendre* of 'God knows how long' and the worldly reference to 'cycle clips'. The result is a muted ironic humour.

So far, so good. What I have suggested is that, in English poetry at least, there exist verbal juxtapositions - collisions - which have the potential of striking a reader as peculiar and thus, perhaps, of being rated as humorous. Their potential for humour is explicable through their similarity in structure to jokes. In both the Betjeman and Larkin extracts, frame abuse occurs: expectations are set up which are subsequently frustrated. In the one case we are led to expect high-register language, in the other, diction and subject matter seldom correspond: what we find instead is language which is slightly incongruous, slightly inappropriate.[9] In the Larkin extract what we get is indeed '*awkward* reverence'.

In combing an English-language text for such anomalies, we employ our intuitive feel as native speakers in order to identify them. This is not a

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[8]This is not to deny the existence of occasional tonal collisions and even bathos in Eliot, however.

[9]In his discussion of ambiguity, Empson 1930, 28, suggests that this kind of deviant expression can be highly evocative since 'the reader thinks of the various colloquial forms which are near it.'

course open to us when examining a text written in a dead language.[10] The question then presents itself: how may we identify collisions in Aristophanes? In place of the tool of intuition a rigorous system of textual analysis needs to be developed. I suggest that such a project requires both the identification of those features in a text which a listener intuitively takes into account when hearing it and reconstruction of the reasonable linguistic expectations of the text's original audience.[11]

In his article on 'The Style of Aristophanes'[12] Dover notes the importance of considering Aristophanic Greek not purely in terms of the occurrence of given lexical items[13] but points out that, commonly, little attention is paid to what he calls the 'flavour' of a given word or phrase - a concept I shall explore below.[14] Through an analysis of Dikaiopolis' monologue from the beginning of the *Akharnians*, he shows the inadequacy of the following categories traditionally used for analysing comedy's lexical items:[15]

(i) normal language;
(ii) spoken language;
(iii) technical language;
(iv) language of serious poetry;
(v) peculiarly comic language - especially words which are intrinsically 'funny'.

In establishing a framework for textual analysis I shall bear in mind the above-listed categories and Dover's recommendation to consider not only a lexical item's distribution in the extant literature in detail but also other aspects of the text. Further, by building on his comments and those of others, I shall attempt to develop a systematic approach for analysing Aristophanic

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[10]Thus Stevens 1976, 2.

[11]Such an audience must comprise the 'ideal', or 'virtual' audience spoken of by Segal 1996, 171 n.36, amongst whose members, he warns, there must have been 'enormous variations'. See Chapter 2, n.2.

[12]Dover 1987, 224-36.

[13]Ibid., 231.

[14]A term he begins to use at ibid., 231, where he also first voices doubts as to the adequacy of the traditional methods of lexeme classification.

[15]The following is a summary of ibid., 224-5.

style, of which the examination of lexemes plays an important but not dominant part.

I propose that in such a textual analysis the following areas should be considered, hereafter referred to as 'features' of the text:

diction;
syntax and word-order;
aural features;
external schematization and formal features;
subject matter.

These features, discussed below, comprise a full list of the aspects of a text which a listener would intuitively take into account when looking for collisions. In discussing them I shall often refer to their 'tone' - a term which has formerly been used without definition. By the tone of a feature is to be understood the typical (and extra-semantic) associations it evokes for a listener.[16] In the case of diction, for example, these associations often concern the lexeme's register and its status as slang, technical vocabulary, old-fashioned and so on. In the extracts of English poetry already discussed, for example, I used the labels 'old-fashioned', 'comic', and 'high-register' to describe the tone of various lexemes. It should be noted at this point that not all features are equally capable of conveying tone: it is scarcely possible to talk of the 'tone' of an aural feature such as alliteration, for example. Nevertheless, the concept of a feature's tone will be utilized when appropriate in the discussion of a given text.

My system of textual analysis borrows much from Silk's discussion of 'Dead Metaphor and Normal Usage' in *Interaction in Poetic Imagery* (27-56). Here, Silk sets himself the task of establishing a methodology whereby an assessment might be made as to whether a metaphor in a given passage should have struck a contemporary listener as either live or dead. As he says, when this is the task at hand 'in most cases there is only one [criterion] available: distribution.'[17] It is my view that the same is true for establishing

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[16]As Miller P. A. 1993, 184, comments, 'every word we use carries with it the sights, sounds, and smells, the social and rhetorical contexts of its previous uses.'

[17]Silk 1974, 34. Later he adds (53), 'one is forced to the tidy but sombre conclusion that in the present state of knowledge the one kind of evidence consistently reliable and available is distributional evidence.'

the tone of a feature. In the absence of specific comments on the passage in hand from a contemporary source, the only avenue remaining is to search the extant literature for other examples of the feature's use and attempt to draw conclusions from these patterns of distribution. Where else is it used? By whom? In what context? How frequently? At what period?

As Silk comments:[18] 'if one is to make inferences from distributional data, one must have general assumptions about one's aims'. The assumptions underlying my research are, then, as follows:[19]

(1) πάντα ῥεῖ.[20] The tonal resonance of a feature as perceived by a speaker or listener is constantly subject to change. Although dramatic change is no doubt rare, evidence indicating the tone of, say, a lexeme used in 500 BC does not, for example, provide conclusive proof of its tonal resonance in 400 BC. An example of an English lexeme the resonance of which has recently changed is the adjective 'crap'. In the 1980s this lexeme would have been considered to be a primary obscenity (='shit'), whereas in the 1990s its status (now generally in adjectival use) is not much more than that of a colloquialism (='bad, rotten, stupid'). It should also be noted that this new use is predominantly found amongst younger rather than older people.[21]

(2) One is trying to establish the status of a feature in the language which is contemporary with the text being examined. Ideally, in my analysis of the passage from the *Peace* this would entail reconstructing the state of the Attic dialect in 421 BC. Obviously, the nature of our evidence makes such precision impossible. Consequently, the use of a feature by any pre-Hellenistic author or its occurrence on a pre-Hellenistic inscription will be noted and its distribution analysed in ways I outline below.

The reasons for the limits of my canon are as follows. As outlined in assumption (1), examination of a feature's distribution in literature dating from before our period allows us insight into the historical change in its use

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[18]Ibid.

[19]My assumptions fall under various headings throughout the chapter, but are nevertheless numbered consecutively.

[20]Or as Silk 1974, 39, puts it: *consuetudo loquendi est in motu* (Varro *LL* 9.17).

[21]Good recent treatments of the subject of language change include Keller 1994 and McMahon 1994. On classical Greek interest in, and possible awareness of, language change, see Solmsen 1975, Chapter 5, esp. 91-3 and 108.

and/or tonal status.[22] Such an examination also helps us to capture its more direct resonances for an audience well-versed in the literature in question. A feature might thus be recognized as being typical of a particular genre or poet. Of course, we also need to look at the distribution of lexemes prior to our era simply to identify a quotation, such as the Homeric κουρίδιον λέχος of *Peace* 844 (*Il.* 15.40).

If we possessed a greater quantity of sources from our target period, it would be unnecessary to use fourth-century texts in our search for parallel features. However, the bulk of literature of the classical period and nearly all of our prose dates from the late fifth and the fourth centuries. Hence, rather than be deprived of a valuable and extensive source of data I shall make cautious use of fourth-century texts.[23]

Literature from the Hellenistic period will not be used for two reasons: (i) remoteness from our target period. Evidence dating from 100 years or more after our target date would be suspect at best. (ii) As Silk notes '...after the death of Alexander the literary language was artificial in a sense it had never been before.'[24] In accordance with Silk's assumption that 'the old are more resistant to linguistic innovation than the young',[25] the latest author I shall include in my ostensibly pre-Hellenistic canon will be Theophrastos, the formation of whose style will be assumed to have taken place in the classical era.[26]

(3) What is to be reconstructed is the tonal resonance a given feature might have possessed for a member of Aristophanes' audience. Thus it is the perceptible ('available')[27] tone of the feature in which one is interested, not

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[22]For this principle, see Stern 1931, 12.

[23]On this principle of methodology, Silk 1974, 38 and Stevens 1976, 6.

[24]Silk 1974, 39.

[25]Ibid., 49. The principle is also discussed at greater length at id. 1995b, 206-7.

[26]Thus Silk 1974, 49. Silk also confronts the problems presented by texts belonging to a corpus of which multiple authorship is suspected (44): he resolves that the Lysianic corpus be included in the pre-Hellenistic canon in its entirety, since it is only the authorship and not the date which is at question. This is not the case with texts in the Hippokratic corpus, however, some of which are certainly post-classical and are therefore to be disqualified from the canon. Silk summarizes views on the dates of Hippokratic texts at ibid., 84 n.2.

[27]A term borrowed from Silk 1974, who says, 36 n.1, that 'normal' in terms of the ' "normal" language state....must be interpreted to mean "relevantly and availably normal" '.

necessarily the tone the author intended it to possess. In any case, whilst the former is determinable, the latter is not.[28]

(4) Although 'the substrate of Aristophanic expression is colloquial',[29] the only language we can hope to reconstruct is the literate language.[30] This is certainly not to say that colloquial expression will be ignored, but merely that our knowledge of the state of the language is necessarily restricted to such written sources as we possess.[31]

(5) Notwithstanding assumption (1), if a lexeme appears to have the same resonance both before and after our era, then it will be considered to have that resonance during our era also.[32]

Naturally this assumption brings danger in its train. To take an example from English diction, the adjectives 'hip' and 'square' have waxed and waned in popularity over the last thirty years. Both were popular items of youth slang in the late sixties and the early nineties, but fell out of use in the period in-between. Should a future generation wish to reconstruct the usage of these lexemes from sources as scanty as those we must use for reconstructing Greek usage, the conclusion might well be reached that 'hip' and 'square' remained popular items of youth slang throughout the thirty-year period concerned. It must, then, be admitted that the methodology I am proposing will sometimes lead us to wrong conclusions.[33] What is more, it is doubtful that linguistic changes in the ancient world occurred at any slower a

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[28]See Silk ibid., 33, 59-63 and his appendix 'On the History of Intentionalism', 233-5 and id. 1983, 314-5 and n.42; the *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, s.v. 'intention', for bibliography and discussion, and also Goldhill 1986, 283 and n.35. *Pace* Heath 1987a, esp. 44-7.

[29]Silk 1980, 124. Cf. Meillet 1913, 216. Or as Bers 1984, 12, comments, 'it is universally agreed that [Aristophanes] attests colloquial Attic usage in the late fifth and early fourth centuries.'

[30]Thus Silk 1974, 35.

[31]See Meillet 1913, 113, 114, 117 and 122 and López Eire 1996, 18 on the difficulties of reconstructing the spoken language.

[32]An example of such a lexeme would be Silk's ὑποτρέχειν, which he argues (1974, 40-1) was most likely a dead metaphor in Sappho (*fr.* 31.10), χρῳ̃ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν, and the Hippokratic corpus (*Fract.* 27), ἔρευθος...ὑποτρέχει. Despite limited evidence, one would be inclined to suppose that this lexeme had a 'neutral' resonance not only for both authors' original audiences but also during the period in-between.

[33]Or as Stevens 1976, 2, comments, 'facts of usage and distribution may be misleading'.

rate than is true of to-day.[34] This said, we are rarely dealing with such a volatile stratum of language as slang.

(6) Period: *ceteris paribus* the closer in date a parallel occurrence of a feature is to our target era, the better evidence it is for assessing the lexeme's tonal status.

(7) Quantity: *ceteris paribus* the more occurrences of a lexeme we find, the more secure its categorization will be considered.[35] The categorization of a rarely occurring feature as 'unusual' is, therefore, never wholly secure, since abnormality can only be established negatively: the identification of a lexeme as a *hapax legomenon*, for example, necessarily constitutes an *argumentum ex silentio*.[36]

(8) Spread: my primary interest is not to recreate Aristophanic idiolect, but rather the more general state of the language as spoken and written in late fifth-century Attica. Thus, the status of a feature is more convincingly established the greater the range of texts and, more importantly, the greater the range of authors in which it appears.

(9) Ancient Testimony: explicit discussion of the target passage or an aspect of the target passage dating from antiquity will be taken into account when assessing any text.[37]

Such are the assumptions which will govern the analysis of all textual features. Now I shall outline the nature of these features, the way in which they will be discussed and the assumptions underlying their analysis. The system of textual analysis to be articulated is by no means foolproof, but does, I believe, constitute a rigorous and adequate methodology.

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[34]Indeed, various kinds of language change occur more readily the less literate a society is: see McMahon 1994, 73. The factors affecting the rate of language change are no doubt manifold, although one would be inclined to believe that to-day's mass media play a rôle in speeding up rather than slowing down this process. For references on this subject see n. 21 above.

[35]On this principle see Silk 1974, 36.

[36]See ibid., 35, and assumption (24) below.

[37]See ibid., 51.

Diction

By diction I mean an author's choice of lexemes. My assumptions concerning the analysis of lexemes are as follows:

(10) In analysing diction it is necessary to examine lexemes as opposed to words. This might be demonstrated by reference to the English word 'lolly'. In English this word represents two lexemes, $lolly_1$ = 'lollipop', $lolly_2$ = 'money' (*slang*). Whereas all occurrences of the word 'lollies' will represent the lexeme $lolly_1$, the word 'lolly' alone in a text could represent either lexeme, or alternatively both, should the text be ambiguous, incomplete or inexplicit. Following this principle of examining lexemes rather than words, I shall also comment on the individual lexemic units within compound-words.

(11) In the same way that a number of lexemes may be represented by the same word, a number of lexemes may also be represented by the same phrase or idiom. For example, the phrasal verb 'make up' represents at least 13 lexemes,[38] and the idiom 'to take someone for a ride' boasts at least a literal and a metaphorical meaning.

(12) Unreliability of lexica:[39] whilst LSJ remains the best available handy reference point, I shall not rely on the evidence of this or any other lexicon for establishing either the tone of lexemes or even how many or which lexemes a word represents. An example of the kind of assumption the lexicon can make is the following entry given under ὀρύσσω in LSJ[8]:

> **V.** πὺξ ὀρ., of a pugilist, to give *a dig* or *heavy blow*, Ar. *Pax* 898; also sens. obsc., like Lat. *foddere*, ib., cf. *Av.* 442.

Whilst ὀρύττω does act as a *double entendre* implying both 'dig, gouge' and an unspecified obscenity at *Peace* 898, there is no reason to believe that the use of ὀρύττειν with a 'sens. obsc.' was in any way standard. At *Birds* 442 the use of ὀρύττειν is indeed connected with an obscenity, but it is not necessarily in itself obscene. The text is as follows (*Birds* 437-43):[40]

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[38]OED^2, s.v. 'make'.

[39]On this issue, see Silk 1974, 83-4; id. 1983, passim, and Chadwick 1996, 1-30.

[40]Dunbar 1995, *ad loc.*, provides a thoughtful discussion of these lines.

Τη. σὺ δὲ τούσδ' ἐφ' οἷσπερ τοῖς λόγοις συνέλεξ' ἐγὼ
φράσον, δίδαξον.
Πε. μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω 'γὼ μὲν οὔ,
ἢν μὴ διάθωνταί γ' οἵδε διαθήκην ἐμοί,
ἥνπερ ὁ πίθηκος τῇ γυναικὶ διέθετο,
ὁ μαχαιροποιός, μήτε δάκνειν τούτους ἐμὲ
μήτ' ὀρχίπεδ' ἕλκειν μήτ' ὀρύττειν–
Ευ. οὔ τί που
τὸν–;
Πε. οὐδαμῶς. οὔκ, ἀλλα τὼφθαλμὼ λέγω.

Tereus And you explain and inform these birds about your plan, for which I've called them together.
Peisetairos: By Apollo, I will *not*, not unless they make a pact with me, the pact that that monkey of a knife-maker made with his wife: that they're not to bite me, or pull at my balls, or to poke me -
Euelpides: You don't mean in the - ?
Peisetairos: Certainly not. No, I'm saying in the eyes.

Thus the use of ὀρύττω as a *double entendre* only occurs once in Greek literature, at *Peace* 898, where it may well be an Aristophanic innovation. Quite rightly, lexeme V was revised for LSJ[9] and the reference to the 'sens. obsc.' excised.

(13) Data concerning the distribution and use of cognates or derivatives does not in itself provide evidence for the distribution or use of the lexeme being investigated.[41]

These points established, let us move on to lexical categories, or rather the headings under which any given lexeme can be considered. Each will be examined from the standpoints of (i) register; (ii) standard usage and *unusual language*, and (iii) flavour. The following schema represents the categories subsumed under these three headings, according to which each lexeme can be classified.

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[41]See Silk 1974, 29-30; *pace* Stern 1931, 12.

(i) Register: elevated language
neutral language
colloquial language
taboo language

(ii) Standard usage and *unusual language*:
standard usage
unusual language (technical language, *hapax legomena*, etc.)

(iii) Flavour: archaism
recent coinage
slang
genre-specific lexeme
author-specific lexeme
lexeme of non-Attic dialect

(i) Register

Three of Dover's five categories for considering lexical items may be grouped under the umbrella term of 'register',[42] namely (1) Normal Language; (2) The Spoken Language, and (4) The Language of Serious Poetry. The category of 'Normal Language' is ambiguous since describing a lexeme as 'normal' can imply that it is tonally normal or alternatively that it is common-or-garden. The issues surrounding the latter meaning will be addressed below. Under the heading of 'register', however, language will be grouped into three categories similar to Dover's, namely: elevated language, neutral language, and colloquial language. To these I shall add a fourth, the category of taboo language.[43]

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[42]It will be noted that I use the word differently from linguists such as Leech, who uses 'register' to describe (1966, 138), 'roles of linguistic activity within society, distinguishing, for example, spoken from written language; the language of respect from the language of condescension; the language of advertising from the language of science'.

[43]Stevens 1976, 2, suggests the following levels of classification for Euripidean language: poetic, prosaic, neutral and colloquial. I believe the categorization 'prosaic' to belong more appropriately to considerations of 'flavour', a concept discussed below.

Lexical items will be categorized according to their distribution in the extant literature. The context of their occurrences within a literary work will also be considered. The categories will be divided along the following lines:

elevated language

lexical items associated by usage with tragic, epic and 'high' lyric poetry[44] and only paralleled elsewhere in passages where parody, pastiche or other appropriation of these genres is suspected;

neutral language

lexical items plausibly associable with all genres;[45]

colloquial language

lexical items found in comedy (barring passages which are either parodic or pastiche) and conversational parts of texts, such as Platonic dialogue, and which are paralleled only in Euripidean dialogue and the orators;[46]

taboo language

lexical items found exclusively in comedy and iambic poetry, with an obscene referent.

The labelling of lexical items as 'colloquial' or 'neutral' does not imply that all lexemes lying within one given category are to be thought of

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[44]I am making use here of Silk's distinction between 'high', 'middle' and 'low' lyric (1980, 119ff.). This is no doubt a problematic category, any definition of which runs the risk of being circular. It includes, I suggest, poetry whose subject matter and aural features can be classified as elevated and whose vocabulary, as far as can be verified, may also be classed as such. The vast majority of Pindar and Bakkhylides would, for example, fall into this category, as would the bulk, but by no means all, of Anakreon. Lyrics such as Anakreon 417 (Page) and *fr.* 358 PMG are, however, conveniently denied the label 'high' by this formula. See Bowra 1961, 7, whose distinction between choral lyric and monody seems apposite here, the former conforming far more closely to what I have called 'high' lyric. See also Stevens 1976, 7, on the difficulties of defining such a category.

[45]My definition is intended to include not just lexemes which *do* occur in all genres but also those which *could*: that is, items which are infrequently attested in the extant literature but which would nonetheless plausibly be at home in any context. An example of such a lexeme is Silk's γλῶσσα, 'shoe lachet' (1974, 49) occurring only twice in the pre-Hellenistic canon - in Plato Comicus and Aiskhines Socraticus. See assumption (19) below.

[46]Silk suggests (ibid., 5) that colloquialisms are to be found in both the direct *and* reported speech of Thoukydides. (see also n.50) Dover 1981, 16, warns, however, that conversation was written down by 'skilled artists who wished to be admired for their artistry'.

as tonally identical as far as register is concerned. This principle is exemplified well by contrasting the tone of *double entendres* with that of primary obscenities: in its obscene sense χοῖρος has the same meaning as κύσθος, and both lexemes would no doubt fall into the category of taboo language, yet κύσθος is to be considered more obscene. If evidence for this is needed, then the scene between Dikaiopolis and the Megarian at *Akharnians* 729ff. provides it, since here the repeated use of χοῖρος has the effect of preparing the audience for the more abrasive κύσθος, which is used twice within a few lines (782, 789).[47]

The following premises will govern my categorization of lexemes according to register:

(14) Colloquial and Neutral Language: I shall assume that together the categories of neutral and colloquial lexemes comprise the norm of Aristophanic register. For this reason, I shall seldom remark when an item falls into either of these categories. The exception to this will be when a colloquial lexeme collides with a high-register feature (be the feature lexical, aural, syntactic or whatever). I shall always comment when a lexeme falls into the category of either elevated or taboo language.

(15) Quality: some authors are more consistent in register than others. For example, it would be surprising to find a lexeme in Aiskhylos that was neither elevated nor neutral in tone.[48] It would be less surprising, however, to find a colloquial lexeme in Euripides.[49] Thus whilst Aiskhylos' register is consistent, Euripides' is less so. As far as prose authors are concerned, one is inclined to trust that the bulk of Thoukidydean narrative is tonally neutral,[50]

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[47]Similarly Dover 1997, 78, suggests subdivisions including 'intimate' and 'jocular'.

[48]Stevens 1976, 8, warns of the presence of the occasional colloquialism in Aiskhylos, especially in satyr plays and also *Prometheus Bound*, whose distinctive range of usage is precisely one of the grounds for doubting the Aiskhylean authorship of the play: see Griffith 1977, 147-89 and 225-6 and 1983, 34.

[49]See Stevens 1976, 8.

[50]Thus Stevens (ibid., 7), who says that those colloquialisms which are to be found in Thoukydides generally occur in dialogue or at least reported speech. See also Dover 1973, 12, who argues that some items of Thoukydides' diction which sounded poetic to later Greeks were most likely considered neutral in the late fifth century.

but to be far more wary concerning the tone of lexemes used by, say, Plato[51] or Demosthenes.[52]

The use of certain authors' texts as transparent evidence is problematic but nonetheless such evidence must often be relied on since, needless to say, occurrences of the lexeme in question in authors whose register is consistent are not always available. To anticipate my conclusions, Aristophanes is the archetypal *in*consistent author, since he plucks lexical items from a wide range of registers in a way that would be unthinkable for a tragic poet or a prose author.[53] Thus any evidence as to a lexeme's tonal status which derives from Aristophanes must be examined and used with care, and the same is true of evidence derived from other authors whose register is inconsistent. This 'care' involves considering the context and subject matter of the passage, being alert to parody or pastiche, and taking other clues from the passage in question (such as the implication of accompanying syntactic or aural features) to assess the potential register of the lexeme.

It ought to be admitted at this point, though, that however much 'care' is taken in considering the nature of the more problematic passages in which a given lexeme occurs, the assessment of its register will often remain open to question. A specific problem which arises is that of circularity: if we categorize a given lexeme occurring only in Aristophanes and tragedy as 'elevated' in tone, then we *ipso facto* classify all of its comic uses as instances

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[51]Silk 1974, 44, posits that Platonic language is halfway between prose and verse (39, quoting Arist. *fr.* 73), a sentiment shared by Palmer 1980, 168. For this view of Platonic style, see also Meillet 1913, 229, and Bers 1984, 12. Norden 1898, 105, goes further still, describing Plato as 'ein ποιητής, der größten einer, die an die ποιητικαὶ θύραι geklopft haben.' See also ibid., 112. Dion. Hal. is critical of the range of Plato's language in *Comp.* and at *Dem.* 5-7.

[52]Stevens 1976, 6, discusses the strongly colloquial nature of some of Demosthenes' expressions. The deictic iota, used so freely by Demosthenes, is also of popular provenance: see Dover 1997, 63-4.

[53]Lesky 1973, 490, makes the unsupported comment that Aristophanes at times, 'greift...mit beiden Händen in der reichen Vorrat der Dichtensprache. Er tut dies vor allem in der Absicht, durch die Parodierung der tragischen Höhenlage komisch zu wirken, er verwendet aber gegentlich, besonders in der Lyrik, auch poetische Formen ohne solche Absicht'. Silk 1980, 120, goes much further, asserting that Old Comedy's '*raison d'être* was, precisely, freedom from predictable decorous restraint, freedom to move at will over the whole expressive range.' See also id. 1987, 78 and 111; 1993, 481; Bers 1984, 12, and Dobrov 1995, 53 and 83. This tendency was also noted in antiquity: see Plut. *Mor.* 853a-854d.

either of parody or pastiche; if, on the other hand, we classify the lexeme as neutral in tone, then we *do not* regard its comic uses as paratragic.[54] To be sure, as Silk has demonstrated, we can hardly rely on Aristophanes to signal paratragic usage:[55] that is to say, there is no easy formula for assessing a lexeme's register. This assessment is best performed through close attention to distributional data. When this data proves inconclusive, the lexeme's register remains uncertain.

(16) Colloquial Language: 'colloquial speech...has certain general characteristics'.[56] When the classification of a lexeme is in doubt, then its exhibition of one of the following characteristics will support its classification as colloquial: (i) exaggeration; (ii) pleonasm; (iii) understatement; (iv) brevity.[57]

(17) Quality and spread are more important than quantity. For example, the classification of a lexeme as high register is more secure if, outside the target passage, it occurs twice in the extant literature, once in Aiskhylos and once in Sophoklean lyric, than if it occurs four times: twice in Sophoklean and twice in Euripidean dialogue.

(18) Parody and Pastiche. The register of a lexeme is securely ascertained when we find it employed for the purposes of parody or pastiche.[58] Thus the lexeme πρέσβυς, for example, has a spread which at first sight we find inconclusive: tragedy - 'high' lyric - Aristophanes. However,

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[54]On this danger, see Stevens 1976, 5, who encounters a similar problem in trying to identify Euripidean colloquialisms.

[55]Silk 1993, 481 and passim.

[56]Stevens 1976, 6; see also Dover 1987, 232, on characteristics of colloquial language. López Eire 1996, 157, comments that, as a general rule, colloquial language is 'más expresiva y surgente que precisa y exacta'.

[57]See Stevens 1976, 4 and 6-8. His earlier comments show, however, that we must tread carefully (2): 'there is something in common between poetry, impassioned oratory and colloquial speech...they all at times use language emotionally and make free use of certain types of expression, such as pleonasm, metaphor and hyperbole.' López Eire 1996 also divides colloquial expressions into various categories (passim). He fails, however, to offer a formula by which we might distinguish, say, elevated ellipsis from colloquial ellipsis, commenting instead (75), 'en realidad...no es difícil localizar la lengua de nivel coloquial en Aristófanes.'

[58]Naturally, to establish with any certainty that a given lexeme is being used for the purposes of parody or pastiche we require evidence from outside the target passage.

examination of two of its Aristophanic provenances render its register unequivocal: it occurs in a passage of lyric pastiche at *Birds* 255, and also at *Thesm.* 146, where the first words Agathon addresses to the Inlaw are ὦ πρέσβυ πρέσβυ.[59]

(19) *Res*: some lexemes are *a priori* unlikely to appear in literary sources because it would be rare for an author to wish to refer to the *res*. Consequently, whilst we can draw inferences about the status of such lexemes from their pattern of distribution, it is less easy to draw firm conclusions. An example of an uncommon *res* resulting in a rare *signum* is Silk's γλῶσσα, meaning 'shoe lachet' found only twice in the extant literature: in Aiskhines Socraticus and Plato Comicus.[60] Although the worldly nature of the *signum* might be thought to add weight to our distributional evidence and imply that this lexeme is to be considered as tonally 'colloquial' we might also ask ourselves the question 'What other word would Herodotos or Aristotle have used in place of γλῶσσα, should he have wished to refer to this *res*?' The answer is 'none', and so the lexeme might better be classed as either tonally neutral or, perhaps better, as neutral-cum-colloquial: a tonally unexceptional lexeme, but one which is unlikely to have been used by a 'serious' poet. ¶

(20) *Signum*: when there are a number of *signa* capable of indicating the same *res* it is often instructive to compare the spreads of the lexemes concerned.[61] Thus some tonally neutral *signa* have tragic equivalents. Examples of these are ἀνήρ, γυνή and υἱός, often replaced in tragedy by πόσις, δάμαρ and γόνος.[62] In such cases distinguishing the relative registers of the synonyms is often unproblematic.[63]

(21) Quotations: one must be careful to distinguish quotations from neutral language or standard usage. Aristotle clearly uses the phrase ἔγχεα δέ σφιν ὄρφ' ἐπὶ σαυρωτῆρος[64] as a quotation and its use in Aristotelian prose ¶

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[59]Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1935, 329, comments in his essay 'Uber die Wespen des Aristophanes' (1935, 284-346) that we most likely miss out on much parody since it is of genres about which our knowledge is limited; cf. Schlesinger 1937, 302.

[60]See Silk 1974, 49: LSJ s.v. III.2.

[61]This is no doubt a highly reductive formula: I do not mean to imply that any two lexemes are ever exact equivalents or even that they are always interchangeable.

[62]For a fuller list of such words, see Palmer 1980, 135.

[63]On this principle, see Stevens 1976, 2 and 4.

[64]'Their spears stood erect on the butt-spike', *Poet.* 1461a2-3, quoting *Il.* 10.152.

does not constitute evidence that this phrase is to be considered as anything other than elevated.

(ii) Standard Usage and Unusual Language

One aspect of Dover's category of 'normal language' touched on in the previous section was the term's application to lexemes which are common-or-garden. The concept of 'normal language' and its opposite, 'unusual language', will form the subject of this section.[65]

In his investigation of metaphor in *Interaction in Poetic Imagery*, Silk uses the term 'normal usage' to distinguish everyday expression (including dead metaphor) from live metaphor. Whilst 'normal usage' is a concept which could be expanded to distinguish a language's normal idiom from phraseology which departs from this norm, it ceases to be a useful concept when applied to lexemes. The status of a metaphor is either 'live' or 'dead' (although there is, potentially, a middle ground in that the metaphor may be live but the listener fails to recognize it as such, and *vice versa*). No doubt neologisms are the lexemic equivalent to live metaphor, but to categorize all other lexemes as the equivalent to dead metaphor would miss out an important distinction: namely that a listener perceives some lexemes as more 'unusual' than others. Different terminology must be coined, and so when speaking of lexemes the categories of 'standard usage' and 'unusual language' will be employed.

There is, then, another heading under which lexemes might be considered aside from register, namely with reference to their 'unusualness': a lexeme might thus be thought of as qualifying as an instance of either standard usage or unusual language. I shall also regard Dover's categories (3) Technical Language and (5) Peculiarly Comic Language as subsumed by this consideration.

One problem concerning my proposed categorization of vocabulary is that what is considered unusual by one listener is often regarded as standard

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[65]Leech 1966, 140, uses terms such as 'strangeness value' and 'deviation' to mean something similar to what I call 'unusualness'. Here he claims, 'literature is distinguished from other varieties of linguistic activity above all by the number and importance of the deviant features it contains.'

usage by another.[66] Thus it is to be considered standard usage for a doctor, but not for a layman, to refer to a medical condition as 'idiopathic'; similarly it is an example of standard usage when a South African uses the lexeme 'robot' = 'traffic light', whereas for members of other English-speaking speech communities this lexeme would be classified as 'unusual'. Rather than be over-specific about the section of Aristophanes' audience whose standard usage we are trying to recreate, a lexeme will be discussed whenever it has the potential of having been judged to be unusual by *any* section of his audience.[67] Operationally, a lexeme will be discussed as potentially 'unusual' if it occurs fewer than half a dozen times in the canon, or if its provenances are restricted to a handful of authors, or one genre or *topos*.

The following are a list of my assumptions ruling the categorization of lexemes as standard and 'unusual'.

(22) Technical vocabulary: technical vocabulary will be categorized alongside *hapax legomena* and Aristophanic compound-words as 'unusual language'. After all, the correct appropriation of a technical lexeme is the mark of a speaker's education or knowledge of what is not common-or-garden.

Dover distinguishes four types of technical language: (1) words which have synonyms in ordinary language; (2) words whose technical sense is different from the meaning they bear in ordinary language; (3) words whose technical and everyday sense is the same, but which are used more scrupulously and consistently in the former, and (4) words which do not appear in ordinary language at all.[68] Where appropriate, these categories will be employed for categorizing technical vocabulary.

(23) Rating unusualness: whilst it is no doubt practically impossible to rate a lexeme's 'unusualness' on a point-scale, one would, to be sure,

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[66]Stern 1931 is faced with a similar problem in deciding what criteria must be met for a word's meaning to be said to have changed. He decides on the following formula (165): 'a change of meaning must involve a *habitual modification* of the traditional semantic range of the word among a *comparatively large* group of speakers'. Disappointingly, he fails to qualify '*comparatively large*' any further. Cf. Dover 1997, 114.

[67]On competing speech communities in classical Athens, see Meillet 1913, 117. On awareness of technical language in classical Athens, see Dover 1997, 114.

[68]Dover 1987, 230. Cf. id. 1997, 115.

intuitively regard some lexemes as more 'unusual' than others: compare the Joycean inventions Pooah! Pfuiiiiiii! (onamatopoeic words, mimicking the sounds made by a badly adjusted gas lamp) with the same author's 'nicens' (...a *nicens* little boy...), or his portmanteau neologisms such as 'turfcoloured' and 'milkcar'.[69] In a similar light, contrast Aristophanes' σκοροδοπανδοκευτριαρτοπώλιδες (*Lys.* 458) with his κατάλειπτος (*Peace* 862). Statistical evidence confirming the paucity of a lexeme's occurrence makes a lexeme *prima facie* unusual, but without a native speaker's ear it is impossible to judge just how unusual a particular lexeme would have sounded.[70]

(24) *Hapax Legomena*: As I have previously noted,[71] the evidence supporting a lexeme's classification as a *hapax legomenon* will by necessity amount to an *argumentum ex silentio* - that is, no other occurrence of the word will have been found in extant Greek. A lexeme whose first occurrence in extant Greek is to be found in the target passage will be considered alongside *hapax legomena* but its other occurrences from our era will be used to make a decision as to whether or not Aristophanes was the coiner of a perceptible neologism.[72]

(25) Colloquial language: when we come across a lexeme which has little or no precedent outside Aristophanes or other Old Comedy it should not immediately be categorized as 'unusual language'. Three categories suggest themselves for classifying such a feature, into which the bulk of words or phrases peculiar to Aristophanes fall:

(i) common (or rural) spoken Attic;[73]

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[69]The first is from *Finnegan's Wake* (15.2280), the last three from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*

[70]On the subject of unusual language, Blake 1981, 12, comments interestingly that, 'an author is unlikely to use as non-standard those features of language which are on the boundaries between the standard and non-standard.'

[71]Above, p.110.

[72]On the problems involved in classifying rarely occurring lexemes, see Dover 1997, 117 and 129. On the concept of perceptible neologism, see Silk 1974, 32 ('sputniks').

[73]On possible differences between rural and urban Attic, see Dover 1987, 232 and 242-3 ; cf. also 227. López Eire 1996, 19, posits that Aristophanes knew of 3 distinct sociolects: (i) intermediate; (ii) excessively refined, and (iii) unmistakably rustic; the tone of all of which he is at pains to reproduce in his comedies. Cf. *fr.* 706 K.-A.

(ii) Aristophanic idiolect;[74]
(iii) used by Aristophanes for specific effect.

These categories might of course overlap and are not exhaustive of the possibilities.

The amount of extant colloquial Attic Greek is small, and Aristophanes' plays are no doubt the richest source of Attic colloquialisms we possess.[75] Therefore, a lexeme occurring in Aristophanes but seldom elsewhere is necessarily a candidate for category (i) common or spoken Greek. If, on the one hand, a lexeme is thought to fall into this category it will *ipso facto* be considered 'standard usage'. On the other hand, lexemes falling into categories (ii) and (iii) will be considered 'unusual'.

(26) *Res/Signum*: a lexeme which is uncommon because it is a *signum* for an uncommon *res* will be considered unusual.[76] When a *res* can be expressed by a number of *signa* it is often instructive to examine the relative frequency of their occurrence in deciding which of them is to be considered the more unusual. Thus the lexemes 'jumper', 'sweater' and 'jersey' might all represent the same *res*, and whilst none of these *signa* has fallen out of usage, 'sweater' is surely a more unusual lexeme than 'jumper'.[77]

(27) Register: a lexeme's status as 'unusual' does not preclude its categorization as high or low register.[78] The tonal status of the vast number of Greek technical words will be neutral. Technical words which are elevated in tone are not uncommon in English - one might, for example, regard some medical vocabulary as such - but as has already been discussed, Greek prose is rarely elevated in tone.[79] Among the few candidates for elevated technical

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[74]On idiolect see Dover 1987, 240 where he comments on the tendency of playwrights 'to use a rare word or expression two or three times in one play and not elsewhere'.

[75]Thus Stevens 1976, 4. See also n. 99 below.

[76]Although Silk 1974, 48-9, would consider such a lexeme to be 'normal usage'.

[77]Undoubtedly, the difference in usage between these three lexemes is partly one of generation, locality and social class. On the advantages of investigating the uses of synonyms, see Stern 1931, 12-13.

[78]*Pace* Arist. *Poet.* 1459a2-3, who appears to argue that an unusual word is necessarily elevated: see Palmer 1980, 134.

[79]See Stevens 1976, 3, who suggests that in English most technical legal and medical vocabulary is 'prosaic'.

lexemes in Greek would be words such as φαλαρά, bosses or rings riveted to a helmet or φάλος, a horn on a helmet: Homeric terms, obsolete by the fifth-century and elevated owing to their association with the genre of epic poetry (although their status as obsolete no doubt makes such a categorization problematic). Taboo words which might also have been considered technical are few in Greek, although candidates do exist, such as λαικάζειν and λεσβιάζειν.[80]

If we are to avoid making *ex cathedra* statements about the unusualness of lexemes, we must cite other occurrences of the lexeme in the Greek of the period along with relevant contextual detail. A lexeme in the passage will be discussed when its occurrence in the extant Greek of my period is rare, when it is an infrequently used alternative for a commonly used lexeme, or when it appears to belong to the realms of technical vocabulary.

(iii) Flavour

There are considerations connected with lexemes which are not covered by the categories of register and 'unusualness'. For this reason, I shall often detail a lexeme's precise spread in the extant literature and comment on its 'flavour'.

The concept of 'flavour' is developed by Dover in 'The Style of Aristophanes' as an antidote to what he sees as the inadequacy of the traditional classification of lexemes. To illustrate the complexity of lexemic flavour, Dover cites the respective spreads of two lexemes, ἀτεχνῶς and οὐτοσί.[81] Both the lexemes are absent from tragedy and the historians, so might legitimately be thought of as elements of 'colloquial language'. Dover notes, however, that whilst ἀτεχνῶς is virtually limited to Old Comedy and

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[80]On the meanings of these lexemes, see Jocelyn 1980a, although *contra* on the meaning of λαικάζειν see Henderson 1991, 153-4 n.12. See also Silk 1990, 153 n.4, who argues, contrary to Jocelyn's position (1980b, 65-7) that βινεῖν is to be considered obscene despite the fact it is supposedly used in a Solonian law (*Solon. Test. Vet.* 448 Martina); cf. English 'buggery' - an item which might be considered both technical (legal) and low.

[81]Dover 1987, 232-3. For other lexemes the spread of which renders their categorization problematic, see Bers 1984, 8.

Plato, the spread of οὐτοσί is Old Comedy - New Comedy - oratory, with the lexeme generally avoided by Plato. These data lead Dover to comment:[82]

> A simple classification into 'spoken language', 'educated language', 'poetic language' does not suffice and many subdivisions of the phenomena common to comedy and prose are required.

Dover does not, however, outline what the nature of these subdivisions might be, although a number of explanations might be proffered to explain these lexemes' respective distributions. For example, Plato might not have regarded οὐτοσί as a lexeme particularly suitable to written Greek, whereas the comic writers and orators were less interested in diverging from the spoken idiom. In a similar way, someone writing German to-day would tend to write 'Ich habe einen Kuli' ('I have a pen') despite the fact that what is heard in the spoken language is frequently 'Ich hab 'nen Kuli'. Likewise, an English speaker might deliver the sentence written as 'it's going to be five minutes' in the form ''s gonna be five minutes' (or even '...five minna'). Other explanations are no doubt possible. For instance, the use of the deictic iota perhaps betrayed a speaker's membership of a certain subsection of the speech community. Whatever the reason, the lesson to be learnt is that it is important not simply to view a lexeme's spread in terms of register and 'unusualness'. Following Dover's recommendation, then, I shall also talk of the 'flavour' of lexemes.

Issues regarding flavour include: whether a lexeme is an archaism; whether it is a recent coinage; whether it has the status of slang; whether it is characteristic of a certain genre or even a particular author, and whether it fails to appear in a genre or author in which its appearance might be expected given its other provenances.

The statistical data collected on a lexeme will first be considered in terms of register and 'unusualness' and subsequently in terms of 'flavour'. Unsurprisingly, the spread of λέχος, for example, which occurs at *Peace* 844, is confined to epic, tragedy and 'high' lyric, and considerations made under the heading 'register' neatly account for this spread, although we might be tempted to add that this lexeme might have also been regarded as archaic in the fifth century. But what of the phrase ἴθι νυν (*Peace* 826)? It has the spread Homer - fifth-century comedy - fourth-century prose. If we first

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[82]Dover 1987, 233.

consider the spread of this lexeme under the heading of register we will most likely come to the conclusion that this phrase was a common colloquialism in the classical period. This categorization does not, however, completely account for the lexeme's distribution and so it becomes necessary to examine the spread in terms of 'flavour'. In Homer the phrase only appears in direct speech and so the best explanation for its spread is that it was an element of the spoken rather than the written language which either was not elevated in the epic age or, alternatively, lost its elevated register over the centuries. This said, however, the possibility ought not to be ruled out that this was an archaism which Aristophanes helped to reintroduce into common parlance.

The following is a list of assumptions which will govern my analysis of a lexeme's distribution under the heading of 'flavour':

(28) Dialect and Register: in Greek poetry, dialect is often correlated with genre[83] - take for example the Doricizing of lexical items in the lyric choruses of tragedy or the (Old) Ionic verb and noun endings in oracles. Furthermore, in elevated verse, characters never speak in dialect as they do in comedy.[84] For this reason, the lexemes of non-Attic dialect will be regarded primarily under the heading of 'register' and only subsequently, should the need arise, under the heading of 'flavour'.[85] I shall not usually comment on lexemes which have an Attic flavouring since these would not have struck Aristophanes' audience as remarkable. The exception to this will be if Attic and non-Attic lexemes are juxtaposed.

(29) Dialect and Unusual Language: a much-attested lexeme occurring only a handful of times in Attic texts will be regarded as a possible candidate for unusual language, even if its occurrence in non-Attic texts is frequent.

In the majority of cases, lexemes of non-Attic stock are easy to identify since they fall into one of the following three classes:

(i) a non-Attic lexeme is pronounced and thus spelt differently from its Attic equivalent, with this variation in spelling following certain rules. An example for this is the -ττ- in spoken Attic compared to the -σσ- in other

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[83]Thus Silk 1974, 38.

[84]Thus Dover 1987, 240.

[85]Stevens 1976, 2, says that, 'some..."poetic" words...were apparently in everyday use in non-Attic dialects.'

Greek dialects, as demonstrated by the variant spellings θάλαττα/ θάλασσα.[86]

(ii) a non-Attic lexeme and an Attic lexeme are the *signa* for the same *res*. At *Poetics* 1457b5 Aristotle cites σίγυνον as an example of a wholly non-Attic lexeme: a Cypriot lexeme meaning 'shield'.[87]

(iii) a non-Attic lexeme identifies a *res* for which there is no *signum* in Attic, such as ἱππαγρέται, 'the bodyguards of the Spartan King'.[88]

Difficulty certainly arises in identifying by means of distribution and context:

(a) lexemes of non-native origin adopted into the language in the way that 'anorak' or 'canoe' have *become* English lexemes.

(b) lexemes both used and perceived as non-native, such as when a Briton talks of 'glasnost' or the 'sidewalk'.[89]

It is a near-impossible task to differentiate such lexemes in the case of Attic Greek in our target era and it is for this reason I provide no Attic examples. When a lexeme is encountered that potentially falls into one of the above categories, its distribution will be given along with contextual detail.

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[86]The misapplication of these rules by ancient poets results in a number of hybrid pseudo-Doric lexemes such as φήμα, πηγά and μηχανά generated by the tragedians which have no precedent in the Doric dialect. Such lexemes would be treated under the heading of 'register'. It ought also to be remembered that prose writers up to and including Antiphon used the panhellenic -σσ- and -ρσ- forms, as did Thoukydides. See the indices of Thumb-Kieckers 1932 and Thumb-Scherer 1959, s.v. ρσ < ρρ and σσ < ττ.

[87]Amongst other distinctions concerning diction, Aristotle differentiates between a loan word, γλῶττα, and a κύριον, a standard lexeme in a dialect (*Poet.* 1457b1-6).

[88]Xen. *HG* 3.3.9, *Lac.* 4.3; Thuc. 4.38.

[89]There is another category of borrowed *signa* which comprises words such as 'cookie' or 'subway'. These have a different or restricted meaning in the dialect into which they have been adopted (British English) from those they possess in the one from which they have been borrowed (American English). Of course, such a word is to be regarded as representing two different lexemes.

(30) Reliability: in terms of dialect, the inherited texts of some authors are more consistent than others. On the one hand, one would generally be prepared to trust a lexeme found in Demosthenes to be Attic[90] and one found in Anaximenes or Anaximander to be Ionic.[91] On the other hand, owing to the use of his lexemes from different dialects and the uncertainty created by poor textual transmission, Herodotos' text is far less reliable from this point of view.[92]

(31) Date: if a lexeme occurs in a target passage for either the first or only time in Greek literature, it will be considered under the heading of 'unusual language'. As for other lexemes, depending on their distribution and context, consideration will be made as to whether they might qualify as either:

(i) a recent coinage (if a lexeme occurs only rarely before or during the target era); or

(ii) a lexeme possessing an archaic flavour in our era (if, *ceteris paribus*, a lexeme's occurrences are more frequent before the target era than within it).

If a lexeme is thought to fall into either of these categories, details of distribution and context will be cited.

(32) 'The old are more resistant to linguistic innovation than the young':[93] *ceteris paribus* the older an author is in years, the more likely he is to use old-fashioned lexemes. On the contrary, the younger he is, the more likely he is to use recently coined lexemes.[94]

(33) Some authors and genres are more likely to make use of recent coinages than others: the orators, for instance, are less likely to be in the vanguard of linguistic coinage than are exploratory poets like Aristophanes or Aiskhylos.

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[90]Still bearing in mind assumption (21) concerning quotations and the category of lexemes outlined above which comprise *signa* for *res* which do not exist in Attic.

[91]Diog. 2.3 = D.-K. 12 B 1. See also Dover 1997, 84.

[92]See Meillet 1913, 222; Palmer 1980, 146; Bers 1984, 7.

[93]Silk 1974, 49.

[94]On the tendency of the old to avoid neologisms see id. 1995b, 206-7.

Syntax

By syntax is understood the grammatical structure and conformations of a language (including at least some of what would be classed as 'word-order'). Examples of specific syntactic features to be discussed from the *Peace* passage include the collocation of an aorist verb and a perfect participle at 825-6, ἤλγουν...διεληθώς, the use of εὐθύ with the genitive case at 819, and the postponement of δέ at line 870.

In a similar way to diction, syntax will be considered in terms of register, 'unusualness' and flavour. Categorization will be made along the following lines:

Register: under the heading of register, syntax can be labelled either 'standard' or 'poetic'.

Standard Syntax: an item of syntax will be considered standard when it is found in the prose of our period, regardless of whether or not it is paralleled in other genres.[95]

Poetic Syntax: syntax which is paralleled in tragedy, epic, or the 'high' lyric poetry of our era but seldom or never elsewhere.[96]

Unusualness: syntax will be considered 'unusual' when it has little or no parallel in the literature of our era; otherwise it will be considered 'normal'. ¶

Flavour: syntax will be considered 'distinctive' when it is characteristic of a particular author, genre or period. Mention will also be made if a syntactic item is potentially colloquial.

The following are a list of assumptions governing the categorization of syntactic features:

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[95]This is not to say that all prose authors always use standard syntax: the recurrence of a feature in a number of prose authors will, however, be considered adequate evidence to establish it as standard.

[96]On ancient discussions of poetic syntax, see Arist. *Poet.* 1458b32-1459a3. For a highly informed modern discussion, see Bers 1984. On more modern linguists' views of poetic language, see Fowler's brief discussion (1966b, 10 and 22).

(34) Standard Syntax: a syntactic feature will be discussed when it could be interpreted as poetic, unusual or distinctive, where these categories are not mutually exclusive. Prose authors will, on the whole, be assumed to employ standard syntax, and consequently a syntactic feature will be considered standard when it has just a handful of parallels in Attic prose of our era. A spread of Plato - oratory - Euripides, for example, is more than sufficient to establish a syntactic feature as standard.[97]

(35) Word Order and Genre: one problem presented by the examination of Aristophanic texts is that whilst Aristophanic iambics generally utilize standard, i.e. prose, word order, the logic of versification may sometimes result in the employment of non-prose word-order.[98] This is not to imply that Aristophanes was the slave, not the master, of his verse-forms, but merely that some departures from prose word order might best be considered as generic (and thus standard) if they are in fact common in Old Comedy. *In fine*, rather than declare all non-prose word-order 'poetic', I shall count as standard all word-order habitually employed in the iambics of Old Comedy.

(36) Unusual and Colloquial Syntax: when a syntactic feature is suspected of being non-standard, references will be provided to such parallels as exist, and the feature's distribution will be discussed, so that it may be interpreted as either (i) unusual syntax, (ii) colloquial syntax, or (iii) Aristophanic idiolect. If a feature is thought to fall into the category of colloquial syntax, it will *ipso facto* be considered 'standard'.

(37) Non-Attic Syntax: as with lexemes of non-Attic origin, it is generally impossible to tell whether syntax of non-native origin which occurs infrequently in Attic authors would have been regarded as non-native (and thus unusual) by the original audience of the text.[99] Owing to this difficulty, I shall in fact make no attempt to locate non-Attic syntax.

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[97]Dover 1960, 10-11, suggests that Herodotos and inscriptional evidence are the most reliable for determining standard Greek word order (useful even when assessing Attic authors, one presumes), and warns of the dangers involved in taking various other authors' word order as standard.

[98]Bers 1984, 12 n.37: 'The requirements of versification are bound to have caused at least some divergence from everyday language.' See also Palmer 1980, 10 and n.2.

[99]Meillet 1913, 187, says of Aristophanic dialogue, 'le grammaire est si purement attique', a statement which he reiterates at 216. At 208, however, he does concede the existence of 'les licences d'usage en poésie, et qui sont employées discrètement'. See also Bers 1984, 7 and 8, who

(38) Normal Syntax: some authors are more likely than others to make syntactic innovations or to use archaic syntax. On the whole, the poet is more experimental with syntax than the prose author. This said, the (inevitably) innovative nature of early prose ought to be borne in mind, as should the experimental nature of Thoukydides' syntax.[100]

(39) 'Attic...was the repository of many archaisms of syntax.'[101] When the spread of an item of syntax suggests that, by the target era, it had fallen out of use in other dialects, this will not in itself constitute evidence for it to be categorized as 'archaic' in Attic.

Aural Features

Under the heading of 'aural features', the text will be considered in terms of (i) metre and rhythm and (ii) other sound patterns.

(i) Metre and Rhythm

Since the bulk of both tragic and comic dialogue is composed in the same metre - the iambic trimeter - comparison is often made between the metrical rules recognized by the poets of these two genres. From the point of view of metre, some lines from the *Peace* passage would either be highly unusual or unimaginable in tragedy. Comic lines admit, for example, more resolutions,

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comments that there is 'fairly good evidence for taking Aristophanes as representing a type of language that, by and large, persisted unchanged into the fourth century', *pace* Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1935, 329, who warns, 'wir aber haben wirklich eine sehr ungenügende Kenntnis von dem, was für diesen Beobachter reines Attisch war.' See also Dover 1960, 16, on the detection of non-Attic syntax.

[100]On Thoukydides and early prose see Palmer 1980, 152-67. On Thoukydides' style, see Norden 1909, 96-9; Dover 1960, 10; Solmsen 1975, Chapter 5, esp. 84-5 and 110, and Dover 1973, 9-13. Of Thoukydides, Norden 1909, 97, comments, 'seine Gedanken sind ihm die Hauptsache, und wo sich ihnen die Sprache nicht fügt, schafft er den ihnen konformen Ausdruck mit der Rücksichtlosigkeit eines Autokrators.' Also cf. Dion. Hal. who devotes sizeable parts of two treatises to marvelling at Thoukydides' innovations in such spheres.

[101]Bers 1984, 189.

far more abuses of Porson's law and contain fewer penthemimeral (or hephthemimeral) caesuras than tragic verse.

These features can be demonstrated in the text in hand. For instance, 840 both violates Porson's law (i.e. has — | —UU— in the final metron) and contains no mid-line caesura:

τῶν πλουσίων οὑτοι βαδίζουσ' ἀστέρων.

Line 881 also violates Porson's law and (alongside an 'acceptable' resolution of the first princeps in the second metrum, i.e. —UU UU—) contains a wholly untragic anapaest in the second 'foot'.

οὔπω λέγεθ' ὑμεῖς τίς ὁ φυλάξων δεῦρο σύ·

It is tempting to rate comic verse on a scale, those lines adhering closely to the conventions of tragic verse being seen as tonally elevated, those abusing the conventions being seen as tonally low. One problem with this approach is that not all tragic verse adheres to the conventions equally: where then is the line to be drawn between more-rather-than-less tragic and more-rather-than-less comic versification, and how useful is this distinction anyway? Abuses occurring in comedy are occasionally found in tragedy, but to a large extent it is simply the case that in comedy such abuses occur with more regularity. Another problem is that it would be misleading to label comic verse that *does* adhere to tragic conventions 'non-comic'. Comic verse displays much greater metrical variation than tragic verse, but a listener would not *expect* to hear abuses of tragic verse conventions, rather he would simply not be surprised when they did occur.

With this in mind, I shall only comment on the more-rather-than-less tragic nature of an iambic trimeter (or its less-rather-than-more tragic nature) if the versification collides tonally with another feature (diction, syntax, etc.). An example of such collision comes at 885, where a non-resolved iambic line, complete with penthemimeral caesura, is combined with a glaringly non-tragic feature, a colloquial lexeme, ζωμός, which has, moreover, the status of a *double entendre*.

τὸν ζωμὸν αὐτῆς προσπεσὼν ἐκλάψεται.

As an exception to this rule, I shall also remark if more-rather-than-less (or less-rather-than-more) tragic rhythm is sustained over a number of verses.

In addition, comment will be made whenever the metre employed is not the iambic trimeter. In such circumstances, I shall note the tonal implications of the metre used, stating the usual subject matters of poetry composed in the metre concerned. Further, I shall examine whether there is a collision between content and metrical form. An example of such collision is to be found at *Lys.* 770-6, where hexameters are used in imitation of an oracle. The tonally elevated status of hexameters contrasts with a tonally low *double entendre* and the colloquial-cum-obscene lexeme καταπύγων of 776. In the following dialogue, Lysistrata is reading aloud an oracle to an unnamed woman.

Λυ. "ἀλλ' ὁπόταν πτήξωσι χελιδόνες εἰς ἕνα χῶρον
τοὺς ἔποπας φεύγουσαι, ἀπόσχωνταί τε φαλήτων,
παῦλα κακῶν ἔσται, τὰ δ' ὑπέρτερα νέρτερα θήσει
Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης -"
Γυ.γ ἐπάνω κατακεισόμεθ' ἡμεῖς;
Λυ. "ἢν δὲ διαστῶσιν καὶ ἀνάπτωνται πτερύγεσσιν
ἐξ ἱεροῦ ναοῖο χελιδόνες, οὐκέτι δόξει
ὄρνεον οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν καταπυγωνέστερον εἶναι."

Lys.: "But when the swallows take refuge together in one place fleeing the hoopoe's pursuit, and keep themselves far from phallicity, there will be an end of troubles, and Zeus who thunders from above will cause what is higher to be lower -"
Woman: You mean *we'll* be lying on top in future?
Lys.: "But if the swallows become disunited and fly up on wings out of the sacred temple, it will be henceforth thought that there is no bird whatever that's such an utter nymphomaniac."

In the next chapter, for economy of expression, I shall refer to verse with rhythm of a more-rather-than-less tragic nature as 'tragic-compatible'.

(ii) Other Sound Patterns

This category comprises phenomena such as alliteration, assonance and rhyme.[102] The repetition of these features can often serve to heighten the listener's awareness of the text in question[103] (although, to be sure, alliteration sometimes confers an hypnotic effect).[104] There is a problem, though, in deciding when such features become noteworthy. How many times does a sound element need to be repeated for it to be counted as a sound-pattern? The character of the Greek language makes this discussion particularly problematic, because its inflected nature results in certain sound elements, such as noun or verb-endings, commonly being repeated.[105] When the repetition of sound elements is merely indicative of the repetition of a syntactic feature, I shall not tend to regard the resulting alliteration or assonance as significant.[106]

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[102]Historically, there has been a good deal of hostility towards the recognition of all of these features in classical literature. For discussion of this scepticism about alliteration in Greek, see Opelt 1958. As far as rhyme is concerned, Todd 1942, 31, claims that its occurrence in both Greek and Latin is always accidental. For a more recent treatment of Greek sound patterns (under the heading of 'assonance, Greek'), see Silk in Hornblower and Spawforth 1996 (s.v.).

[103]Opelt 1958 highlights the two main 'functions' ascribed to alliteration, namely (i) the structural and (ii) aural functions. In performing (i), alliteration is to be thought of as binding words together and helping to cohere a sentence: in performing (ii), as raising the words and phrases out of the text. Defradas 1958, 40, talks of both its 'expressive' value, i.e. its potential to realize sounds appropriate to the subject matter, and, 48, of its mnemonic value. Silk refines and adds to this list (Hornblower and Spawforth 1996, s.v. 'assonance, Greek').

[104]A good example of which may be found in the choric songs of Tennyson's *Lotos Eaters*. Dover 1987, 232, says of Gorgias' fondness for repetition that it is as if he is 'trying to put the audience under a spell'.

[105]Denniston 1952, 126, believes the Greek ear to have been fairly insensitive to sound patterns: he comments (124) that, 'Greek...shows a surprising tolerance of cacophony', giving examples of a number of jingling juxtapositions which he views as 'unpleasant' (125). See Denniston's chapter on 'assonance' (1952, 124-139) for a brief survey of sound-patterns in classical Greek prose.

[106]Opelt 1958, 208, is in accord with this principle, and further argues that alliteration involving the stems of verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs is more significant than that involving other parts of speech. Defredas 1958, 44, argues that alliteration is more significant when occurring at the beginning of the verse, or before or after the mid-line caesura. See also Leech 1966, 152-3.

To highlight the difficulties in identifying sound patterns, let us contrast two pieces of text from the *Peace* passage. First, 919-22:

δεινῶν ἀπαλλάξας πόνων
τὸν δημότην
καὶ τὸν γεωργικὸν λεὼν
Ὑπέρβολόν τε παύσας

To a non-Greek speaker the repeated sound elements -ων, -ας, -ον might appear to be noteworthy examples of sound-patterns. In fact, the element -ας is on both occasions of its occurrence a masculine nominative singular ending of an aorist participle. Similarly, the element -ον is a masculine accusative singular ending on all four occasions of its occurrence: twice a noun ending, twice part of the definite article. The three occurrences of the element -ων are, on the other hand, different elements of syntax: the endings of δεινῶν and πόνων are genitive plural noun endings, whereas the ending of λεών is a masculine singular noun ending. In addition, πόνων and λεών share a quasi-rhyming location, both occurring at the end of iambic dimeters, although their similarity in form may be thought less significant when the words' accentuation is considered - they do not fully chime (let alone *rhyme*) since the pitch is different each time.[107]

A more significant sound-pattern occurs in 869:

ὁ πλακοῦς πέπεπται, σησαμῆ ξυμπλάττεται

The phoneme /p/ occurs five times, only once outside a word stem (the reduplicated first π– of πέπεπται, indicating the perfect tense).[108] Similarly, the phoneme /s/ occurs four times (if we include the ξ of ξυμπλάττεται), only once as the result of a word ending, in πλακοῦς. The repetition of the phoneme /t/ is less striking as a feature, since it occurs twice in verb endings and only once in a word stem, although the chiming verb endings -πεπται and -τεται (one perfect, one present) are perhaps noteworthy. Also

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[107]On the problems of accentuation and music, see Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 9.40f., and Allen 1968, 108-9. The latter says that, whilst the prosody of speech was probably subordinate to the melody in song, the acute accent (110), 'is nearly always marked in the musical inscriptions to be sung on a higher note than any other syllable in the word'.

[108]Opelt 1958, 214, notes a Greek predilection for alliteration involving plosives.

noteworthy is the assonance in /ă/ present in πλακοῦς, σησαμῆ and ξυμπλάττεται.

Whilst assonance and alliteration are found in high and low literature alike, in many of their high-profile manifestations they are generally thought to be more characteristic of the latter.[109] Alliteration involving the phoneme /s/ was certainly regarded by many ancient commentators as inappropriate to tonally high literature.[110] Rhyme, too, is generally avoided in high poetry, its occurrence being far more common in other genres, most notably skolia and Gorgianic prose.[111] The following two examples of skolia demonstrate well the genre's use of these 'low-rather-than-high' features. The following skolion displays both internal and end-line rhyme:[112]

εἴθ' ἄπυρον καλὸν γενοίμην μέγα χρυσίον
καί με καλὴ γυνὴ φοροίη καθαρὸν θέμενη νόον

If only I could become a great handsome unfired golden bowl
And a handsome woman carried me with pure thoughts in her mind.

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[109]See Silk 1974, 224. Alliteration and assonance do occur frequently in early prose, such as Heraklitos, Demokritos and Gorgias: see Denniston 1952, 2. Thus early prose had what Denniston calls (15) 'a poetic tinge', a characteristic it shared with certain forms of later prose, such as funeral orations and civic speeches (18). On the *Redefiguren* of Gorgianic prose and its influence on fifth-century prose, see Norden 1898, 15-126. Cf. also Thompson 1953 on the possible ritual origins of Gorgias' style, esp. 79-83.

[110]Wilkinson 1963, 13, comments, 'there was one point on which all ancient critics were agreed - that an excess of sibilants was peculiarly cacophonous.' See also ibid. 14-15 and Denniston 1952, 125.

[111]Silk 1980, 128, states, 'it is, of course, true that high poetry made use of various forms of symmetry.... But equally there can be no doubt that...the comic poet's refrains and his other parallel structures are usually of popular provenance.' Tragic examples are certainly not unknown, such as the striking Soph. *El.* 1036: ἀτιμίας μὲν οὔ, προμηθίας δὲ σοῦ. On antithesis and rhythm in (especially Gorgianic) prose, see Norden 1898, esp. 16-50. For statistical analyses of various authors' use of rhyme and assonance, see Dover 1997, 152-5. On rhyme and alliteration as features of proverbs, see Störmberg 1954, 12 and Dover 1997, 136-7. Strömberg even comments, *loc. cit.*, that proverbs 'are sometimes changed in folk usage in order to make them rhyme'. Cf. Westermarck 1930, 26.

[112]Campbell 1993, 288-9, *PMG* 901.

The sound-pattern of the poem is fairly complex, the elements –ον and -η being repeated throughout.

My second example of a skolion displays both the 'low' features outlined above, namely end-line rhyme and the repetition of the phoneme /s/:[113]

σύν μοι πῖνε συνήβα συνέρα συστεφανηφόρει
σύν μοι μαινομενῳ μαίνεο, σὺν σώφρονι σωφρόνει.

Drink with me, be youthful with me, love with me, wear garlands with me,
Be mad with me when I am mad, sober with me when I am sober.

Both these skolia display heavy assonance as well as internal and end-line rhyme; characteristics shared by the following passage from the *Wasps* (1234-7), which comprises two lines of skolion followed by a two line reply.

Φι. "ὦνθρωφ', οὗτος ὁ μαιόμενος τὸ μέγα κράτος,
ἀντρέψεις ἔτι τὰν πόλιν· ἃ δ' ἔχεται ῥοπᾶς."

Βδ. τί δ', ὅταν Θεώρος πρὸς ποδῶν κατακείμενος
ᾄδῃ Κλέωνος λαβόμενος τῆς δεξιᾶς·

Phil.: 'You, fellow, that are eager for supreme power, you'll ruin the city yet; she is close to the turn of the scale.'
Bdel.: What about when Theoros, reclining in the place below Kleon, takes hold of his right hand and sings...

In his discussion of 'Greek assonance' in OCD[3], Silk distinguishes between: (1) consonantal repetition (of which alliteration is a subset); (2) vocalic repetition; (3) syllabic repetition, or near repetition, of stem syllables, and of (4) final syllables (rhyme or near rhyme). I shall make use of Silk's categories for classifying instances of assonance, and bear in mind his claim that whilst type (3) is the least common, it is (more often than any of the other categories) 'usually significant'.[114]

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[113]Ibid., 290-1, *PMG* 902.

[114]Hornblower and Spawforth 1996, s.v. 'assonance, Greek'.

External Schematization and Formal Features

Examples of external schematization include elision, anadiplosis and tricolon. The term 'formal feature' will cover phenomena such as the distribution of the dialogue between characters and sentence length.[115] Under these headings will also be considered variation of sentence type (exclamation, question, etc.).[116]

In commenting on external schematization and formal features, my practice will be to note whether a given feature is paralleled in other genres or in particular authors. The bulk of comparisons to be made will be with tragedy. This is the case for two reasons: first, it is easier to compare the features in genres which are structurally similar; and second, Aristophanes appears to have had a special relationship with the genre of tragedy in general and with Euripidean tragedy in particular.[117] My practice will be to remark on the more striking external schematization and formal features of the text and to state whether or not they are parasitic on - or a pastiche of - another genre. Identification of the genre to which a given feature belongs is especially important for locating instances of collision.[118]

A note on elision. Much elision and crasis is pan-generic and therefore not noteworthy. Examples of unexceptional elision from the passage include γε elided to γ' at 857 and ἐστί elided to ἐσθ' at 877. Elision will be highlighted only when it is non-standard: an example of such an atypical feature is the prodelision of the epsilon of 'πιβάς at 866. The same principle will hold for crasis.

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[115]That is, what Aristotle calls τὰ σχήματα τῆς λέξεως (*Poet.* 1456b8). I shall remain undeterred by Aristotle's admonition (1456b12-14), παρὰ γὰρ τὴν τούτων γνῶσιν ἢ ἄγνοιαν οὐδεν εἰς τὴν ποιητικὴν ἐπιτίμημα φέρεται ὅ τι καὶ ἄξιον σποῦδης.

[116]Although, to be sure, this is partly a semantic as well as a formal consideration.

[117]Thus Silk 1993, 477-8.

[118]Dover 1981, 21, also identifies certain colloquial features in story-telling from other traditions, such as the repetition of phrases and ideas.

Subject Matter

So far no account has been taken of the semantic substance of the text. In poetry, form and content are generally inseparable. Nowhere is this more obvious than Greek poetry, where each metre even has its associated subject matters and diction. For example, the telesilleans and reiziana employed at *Peace* 856-8, 860-3, 909-11 and 913-15 have associations in Aristophanes with marriage hymns.[119] Thus the metre of poetry especially creates expectations concerning subject matter, and subject matter creates expectations concerning metre and diction. Should these reciprocal expectations not be fulfilled, collision occurs.

Just as different lexical items, syntactic items and metres can be thought of as having different registers, so different subject matters can be more or less elevated. A text is to be regarded as elevated when it concerns man's ethical condition, and low when it concerns his physical condition.[120] Obscenity exemplifies this principle well, for obscene vocabulary is always associated with man's physical imperatives, and taboo vocabulary, as we have seen, is of low register.[121] Humour is also itself to be viewed as low-register, since within its occurrence in poetry of our period it is generally restricted to low-register verse: the iambographers; Old and New Comedy.[122]

Mention will be made whenever there is potential collision between subject matter and another feature.

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[119]For detailed discussion, see below *ad loc.*

[120]On this difficult area see Silk 1980, 122-3, plus his comments on the phallic song of the *Akharnians* at 130-2. See also Dover 1981, 17 and Silk 1996b, 473, on 'tragic language' being characterized by preoccupation with 'identity, excess, [and] compulsion'. Aristotle's comment at *Poetics* 1451b5-8 is apposite here: καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστιν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει.

[121]Bakhtin's work is very much concerned with the lower end of the scale and with (1984, 19), 'degradation, that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract.' See especially ibid., 19-21.

[122]See Taplin 1996, 190, who compares laughing itself with basic bodily functions such as yawning and vomiting.

Methodology

The first stage of analysing diction is to locate in the evidence other occurrences of the word under investigation. This task is performed by use of lexica and indices to the authors and inscriptions of the target period in tandem with the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* on the CD-ROM. With these citations found, the original sources are then consulted so as to establish to which lexeme each citation of the word belongs. Thus the distribution of a lexeme is established and contextual detail concerning the lexeme's use can be collated. Lexemes to be regarded as unexceptional will in general not be discussed. When, however, a lexeme is to be considered noteworthy, references will be given to other occurrences of the lexeme in question and pertinent examples will be quoted. On those occasions when secondary literature is referred to, adequate evidence for the lexeme's distribution will be found therein.

Where appropriate, syntax will be analysed in a similar way to diction. For example, to ascertain the frequency of the employment of εὐθύ plus the genitive (*Peace* 819), other occurrences of the lexeme will be sought employing this construction. Manuals of Greek grammar and usage will sometimes be consulted to establish standard usage: for instance, it can be established through reference to Denniston's *The Greek Particles* that the postponement of δέ at *Peace* 870 is standard usage. Sometimes, however, ascertaining the nature of a syntactic feature will require combing the pre-Hellenistic corpus in order to look for parallel usage.

I have already detailed the way in which I shall analyse aural features.

As far as verbal conformations and formal features are concerned, equivalents will be sought from pre-Hellenistic literature. For reasons outlined above, the richest vein of parallels will be tragedy.

Where possible and appropriate, subject matter will be paralleled from elsewhere in the pre-Hellenistic canon.

Such are the assumptions and methodology which will govern the examination of Aristophanic text in the next chapter. Let us now put this system of textual analysis to use.

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Chapter Five

Analysis of *Peace* 819-921

The project of this chapter is to analyse a passage of Aristophanic verse, namely *Peace* 819-921, with a view to showing how a listener might categorize its text in accordance with the model articulated in Chapter One. This micro-level examination will allow all possible factors affecting a listener's classification of text to be taken into account. To assist in this project, the system of textual analysis outlined in the previous chapter will be employed. My discussion will also be informed by the exploration of humour and obscenity in Chapters Two and Three. The given passage has been chosen because it presents in just over 100 lines a range of problems which, as far as the classification of text is concerned, is representative of those encountered throughout the Aristophanic corpus. Taken as a whole, the passage contains text which a listener would potentially distribute between all four modes of discourse as well as text which possibly defies classification. Thus, I hope this extract will provide for discussion a cross-section of the problems encountered by the listener in classifying Aristophanic text. The passage also displays wide variety in its lexical, aural and syntactic features, and so may, in this respect too, be considered broadly illustrative of the Aristophanic corpus as a whole.

The passage divides neatly into two halves, each comprising an exchange between Trygaios and his slave in iambics followed by mini choral odes (which correspond metrically) sung by Trygaios and the chorus. An inequality between the two halves, however, lies in the fact that the second contains many primary obscenities whereas the first does not. The uses and effects of obscene language have already been discussed at length in Chapter Three and the obscenities contained within this passage will be the subject of further comment towards the end of the present chapter. One focus of interest here will be to observe just how Aristophanes prepares the audience for the torrent of obscenities. It is of particular interest that the iambics of the first half of the passage reach their climax in a *double entendre* at 856, and that after the ensuing choral ode of 856-67

the floodgates are then open for the obscene expression of the passage's latter half.

The chapter will be structured as follows. Following some preliminary remarks, lines 819-867 will be the subject of a lengthy and detailed analysis. The aim of this will be to observe how features such as diction, sound effects and subject matter are affective at the micro-level of the text; special attention will be paid to subtle changes in the text's tone and to collisions. Instances of humour will be highlighted and discussed in the light of the model of humour perception previously articulated. I shall then take stock of this analysis and shall examine briefly excerpts from the second half of the passage (868-921). By these means I hope to draw some tentative conclusions about Aristophanes' style (in this passage at least). As we shall see, the passage is particularly noteworthy for the sheer variety of textual features it contains and its constantly shifting tone and register. For example, we find lexemes and syntax drawn from a wide variety of stylistic habitats; alliteration and assonance is sometimes heavy, sometimes not; and the licences Aristophanes permits himself with metre often vary from line to line. Whilst the way in which all these textual features interrelate is of interest, perhaps most remarkable is the degree to which the register of the diction on the one hand and of the metre on the other either coincide or clash at different points in the passage. These 'coincidences' and 'clashes' will constitute one focus of my analysis and will be discussed further in my conclusion.

The close of this chapter will be outward-looking, outlining ways in which the conclusions drawn from this brief analysis of Aristophanic text may have implications for the study of his work as a whole. Most especially I shall emphasize how, owing to the constantly changing tone of Aristophanes' verse, the listener will often perceive the text to be lying in a 'Playful' frame: in other words, the nature of the text is such as often to lead the listener to believe that humour is imminent. I suggest also that the line between serious and humorous discourse is often blurred as far as the listener is concerned; that is, he will find it difficult to categorize much Aristophanic text as lying in either the serious or humorous mode. This quality of Aristophanes' text, I propose, adds to its 'playful' character.

At this point it ought to be reiterated that the text's 'listener' is to be thought of as an 'ideal' member of the play's original audience.[1] As I have stated previously, it is the nuances that the passage's language would have held in the late fifth century which are to be reconstructed. Let it be noted in addition that I am inevitably assuming that a fifth-century Athenian would have undergone the intuitive psychological processes in categorizing text as humorous described by my model.

It will be observed in the textual analysis which follows that I concentrate on the exceptional elements of the text - obscenity, collision and alliteration, for example - to the extent that some lines receive little or no comment. I do not wish to imply that the norm from which such phenomena diverge is somehow uninteresting or unimportant. Naturally, this norm plays a crucial rôle in providing a foil for the more exceptional elements of the text. But in addition to this, unadorned, unexceptional expression is possessed of a candour and directness denied to more challenging language: a consideration which no doubt informs the choice of language of authors such as Brecht.[2]

Naturally, I shall assume a good deal of familiarity with the text on the part of the reader. By far the most useful commentaries of recent years are those of Platnauer (1964) and Olson (1998). The edition of Rogers (1913) contains some interesting material, although his interests are selective and his text accompanied by a somewhat dated and bowdlerized translation. In his translation Sommerstein (1985) makes bold attempts to capture the spirit of the Greek, but his commentary is self-consciously selective. In the preparation of this chapter I have not made textual criticism my concern. Rather, I have chosen (but for a handful of instances) to reproduce Olson's text, to which the reader is referred

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[1]On this concept, see Chapter 2, n.2.

[2]Brecht's choice of everyday language is evident throughout his work, but is perhaps most striking in his *Buckower Elegien* in poems such as 'Rudern, Gespräche' and 'Heisser Tag'. See also Silk's comments on 'saying', 1995a, 118, 127 and 131 n.41.

for an *apparatus criticus*.[3] Where I have departed from Olson's text, the reader is made aware of this in the chapter's footnotes.[4]

A note on terminology. As stated in the previous chapter, for the sake of economy of expression I shall often refer to a line of verse as 'tragic-compatible' or 'strictly tragic-compatible'. The term 'tragic-compatible' is intended to imply that as far as rhythm is concerned (and rhythm alone) the line in question would not be out of place in a tragedy: there is no abuse of Porson's law; there is a penthemimeral or hephthemimeral caesura (exceptionally a midline caesura), and one (or at the most two) resolutions of a kind which would not be out of place in tragic verse.[5] By 'strictly tragic-compatible' I mean that the line in question contains *no* resolutions and an appropriate caesura. By choosing this terminology I do not wish to imply that strict iambic metre is either somehow *un*comic or, alternatively, tragic in and of itself (after all, the rhythm of many verses in tragedy is not 'strictly tragic-compatible'). Rather, 'strictly tragic-compatible' metre only becomes noteworthy when combined with another feature, for example an unelevated or tragic item of diction.

Peace 819-921

The passage in question, *Peace* 819-921, comes directly after the play's parabasis. Trygaios returns home from the gods with two girls, Theôria and Opôra, both of whom remain silent throughout the scene. Once Trygaios has announced his arrival, the slave makes enquiries as to his master's experiences in heaven, to which Trygaios offers various jokey replies. Subsequently the two speak about the arrangements for the two girls. First they discuss the preparations which must be made for Trygaios' impending marriage to Opôra. Then Trygaios and the slave talk about presenting Theôria to the Council and the celebrations which will result. After the lyric exchange of 856-67 the discussions continue, this time interspersed with a good deal of exuberance of expression including a number of

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[3]Consultation of Platnauer's text will also prove rewarding for variant readings and an *apparatus criticus*.

[4]The exception to this rule is the appendix, where footnotes are impractical: I have followed Platnauer's readings of 872 and 882.

[5]On the frequency of resolutions at various positions in tragic iambic verse, see West 1982, 81-2.

primary obscenities and sexual *double entendres* about the girls.[6] Finally at 909-21, the chorus and Trygaios sing of the blessings the latter has brought the people in securing peace.

819-823

Τρ. ὡς χαλεπὸν ἐλθεῖν ἦν ἄρ' εὐθὺ τῶν θεῶν.
ἔγωγέ τοι πεπόνηκα κομιδῇ τὼ σκέλει.
μικροὶ δ' ὁρᾶν ἄνωθεν ἦστ'. ἔμοιγέ τοι
ἀπὸ τοὐρανοῦ 'φαίνεσθε κακοήθεις πάνυ
ἐντευθενὶ δὲ πολύ τι κακοηθέστεροι.

As stated above, Trygaios' lines follow on from the play's parabasis, the final strophe and antistrophe of which are far from elevated, containing a good deal of personal abuse directed towards contemporary tragic poets. The first lines of our extract, 819-23, are to be regarded as neutral-cum-colloquial in tone. Although I shall not, as a rule, be interested in textual features which are tonally unexceptional, it will nevertheless be instructive to look briefly at how a sample of features have come to be classified as such. This I propose to do by using some of the unexceptional features of 819 as examples. Among the neutral items this line contains is χαλεπός. Interestingly, this lexeme never appears in tragic iambics (at least partly owing to its rhythmic shape, no doubt), but does occur eight times in tragic lyric and recitative (Aesch. *Ag*. 1502, *Supp*. 165, *Sept*. 228; Soph. *Tr*. 1271; Eur. *Hipp*. 767, *El*. 1352, *Med*. 1268, *fr*. 975 Nauck) and once in iambics in a satyr play (Eur. *Cyc*. 569). χαλεπός also appears in a large number of other authors and in a number of genres, this latter datum confirming its 'neutral' status. The use of χαλεπόν plus infinitive is also common.[7] ἄρα plus the imperfect of εἰμί is similarly unexceptional: Platnauer (*ad loc*.) notes that it is idiomatic, following Denniston who comments that ἦν ἄρα is used to denote 'that something which has been, and still is, has only just been realized'.[8] Stevens

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[6]On exuberance, see Chapter 2, n.12

[7]See Kühner-Gerth 1898, 2.2.13ff. The construction is also neutral: although absent from tragedy (for reasons stated above), it occurs frequently in authors as diverse as Homer and Aristophanes (elsewhere).

[8]Denniston 1934, 36-7.

includes the phrase in his list of colloquialisms, but its appearance in such authors as Homer, Hesiod, Aiskhylos and Theognis suggests that if it is a colloquialism it is so only in a very limited sense.[9] The line's rhythm is also unexceptional. It may be called 'tragic-compatible', containing as it does just one resolution, that of the first princeps.

More worthy of attention in this line, however, is the occurrence of the construction εὐθύ plus genitive. εὐθύς and εὐθύ are commonly used as adverbs, the general distinction (in Attic authors at least) being that εὐθύς is used of time ('straightaway, immediately') and εὐθύ of place ('straight', as at Soph. *OT* 1242-3 εὐθὺ πρὸς τὰ νυμφικὰ / λέχη). On occasion, however, εὐθύ(ς) finds use as a preposition meaning 'straight to'. In this capacity, some Attic authors use εὐθύ exclusively, some εὐθύς.[10]

Commenting on Eur. *Hipp.* 1197 (τὴν εὐθὺς Ἄργους κἀπιδαυρίας ὁδόν), Barrett suggests that εὐθύ plus genitive is the 'normal Attic' usage and cites as confirmation of this fact Eratosthenes, who 'in the 3rd cent. could use the phrase εὐθὺς Λυκείου as evidence that a passage ascribed to the 5th-cent. comic poet Pherekrates (*fr.* 110K) was spurious'. He adds that ἰθύς is standard in epic (examples include *Il.* 12.254 ἰθὺς νηῶν, *Il.* 21.540 ἰθὺς πόλιος), whereas ἰθύ is never found. He concludes that 'Eur. is allowing himself a mild epicism', an indulgence which he also permits himself in a fragmentary lyric from the *Telephos*, εὐθὺς Ἰ[λίο]υ πόρον (*fr.* 18-20.5 Handley-Rea = 727c K) (it is quite possible that Pherekrates was aiming to achieve either a parody or pastiche of such a usage). Certainly εὐθύς is the favoured preposition in tragedy, whereas Aristophanes, Plato and Thoukydides, for instance, exclusively employ εὐθύ. A similar prejudice is found even in the use of the adverb: εὐθύ is found just once in tragedy (Soph. *OT* 1242, cited above) and is unknown in lyric,[11] even when the

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[9]For a fuller list of references, see ibid. Stevens' list of colloquialisms (1976) often includes items which appear in conversational parts of elevated texts and which are not, therefore, strictly 'colloquial' in accordance with the definition given in Chapter 4 (see above, p.114).

[10]For evidence, see paragraph below.

[11]ἰθύ never; ἰθύς twice (as an adverb): Callin. 1.9 West, Tyrt. 11.4 West.

intended sense is spatial rather than temporal (thus εὐθύς at Pi. *P*. 4.83 and *I*. 8.41).[12]

The reason why the construction εὐθύ plus genitive is of particular interest is that its use in this play could be said to amount to something of a jingle. Four of its ten occurrences in the Aristophanic corpus come in the *Peace*. Of these, two are to be found within 10 lines of each other in the slave's speech of 64-81, where the madness of Trygaios' actions is under discussion. At 76-7 the slave quotes Trygaios as having said:

> "ὦ Πηγάσιόν μοι," φησί, "γενναῖον πτερόν
> ὅπως πετήσει μ' εὐθὺ τοῦ Διὸς λαβών".

At 76, the scholiast comments that these lines are similar to τὰ ἐκ Βελλεροφόντου Εὐριπίδου and quotes the original utterance of Bellerophon upon which this line is based (*fr*. 306 Nauck):

> ἄγ' ὦ φίλον μοι Πηγάσου πτερόν.

The slave's speech contains another quotation of Trygaios' where εὐθύ is employed. At 68 he is said to have asked:

> "πῶς ἄν ποτ' ἀφικοίμην ἂν εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός;"

In connection with these supposed quotations from the *Peace*, it is worth noting the use of εὐθύ plus genitive at *Birds* 1421. Here, as at *Peace* 77 the construction is also used alongside a reference to flying (πέτεσθαι, cf. πετήσει) and in close proximity to a piece of tragic parody, line 1420 being an adaptation of Aesch. *Myrm*. 140 Radt ὅπλων ὅπλων δεῖ). The text reads:

> Συ. πτερῶν πτερῶν δεῖ. μὴ πύθῃ τὸ δεύτερον.
> Πε. μῶν εὐθὺ Πελλήνης πέτεσθαι διανοεῖ;

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[12]The investigation of the use of this complex of lexemes is made difficult by the fact that εὐθύς/ εὐθύ in Attic authors is often subject to editing. Hermann, for example, emends Pi. *P*. 4.83 (as does Steffen Sosith. 99F2.13 Snell/Nauck) to read εὐθύ. To add to the confusion, Attic prose authors sometimes use εὐθύς adverbially in a spatial sense. For data on εὐθύς/εὐθύ, see also Neil 1901 on *Eq*. 251-4.

These data no doubt raise more questions than they answer about the use of εὐθύ at *Peace* 819. Certainly they are compatible with a number of interpretations. One explanation is that Aristophanes employs εὐθύ plus genitive in the cited passages *because* it is untragic and so provides a neat collision with the surrounding paratragic material. Another is that Aristophanes' recurring use of this construction is an instance of 'every playwright['s] tendency to use a rare word or expression two or three times in one play'.[13] As a wholly unprovable but nonetheless more tempting explanation, however, I would propose that εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός (or εὐθὺ τῶν θεῶν) is a quotation from a tragedy (perhaps Euripides' *Bellerophon*, perhaps a more recent play). That this phrase has been extracted from the *Bellerophon* would fit neatly with the fact that the phrase is used in quotations attributed to Trygaios who is, in this speech (as in much of the play), being cast as a Bellerophon figure. On the other hand, it might be thought appropriate to discount the possibility of εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός (or εὐθὺ τῶν θεῶν) being a tragic quotation on the grounds that εὐθύ plus genitive is indeed absent from extant tragedy, εὐθύς being the preferred preposition (and indeed adverb). As a counter to this objection, however, it could be argued that Aristophanes has chosen to quote this phrase for the very reason that it is so glaringly untragic. A tragedian has used a lexeme which is not τὸ πρέπον and so Aristophanes mocks it in prominent positions in his play: in two paratragic quotations (68 and 77); at 301, the chorus' first line in the play (εὐθὺ τῆς σωτηρίας), and in the present passage, in the first line of Trygaios' speech.

Whilst tempting, it is of course imprudent to claim for this phrase the status of a lost quotation. Nevertheless, what can be claimed with some certainty is that the use of the phrase εὐθὺ τῶν θεῶν at 819 would evoke for an audience the repetition of εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός in the slave's speech. It may simply be, as the scholiast on *Peace* 76 suggests, that Aristophanes employs (and subsequently

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[13]Dover 1987, 240; cf. Dover 1968b, 86-7. Miller, H. W. 1945, 400, comments: 'A comic effect frequently results when a word or phrase previously used by the poet is introduced again later in the same play under circumstances to inspire humour. The first usage may have been in itself comic; in that case, the recurrence reminds the audience of the earlier comic association of the word. Or the previous occurrence, not in itself comic, may now be so used in mimicry or derision, frequently with reversal of situation, as to promote laughter'. See also ibid., 406.

repeats) this phrase in order to stress the brazenness of Trygaios' journey (διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν αὐτοῦ δηλοῖ (RVLh)).

Trygaios' statement of 819 is sweeping and might even be considered elevated, depending on an actor's delivery (indeed, if it does display ὑπερηφανία it must be considered somewhat elevated). It is followed, however, by a bathetic sentiment, whereby the grand scope of Trygaios' voyage to heaven is contrasted with the physical discomfort it has caused (820):[14]

ἔγωγέ τοι πεπόνηκα κομιδῇ σκέλει,

a statement which might be considered humorous by a listener on the grounds that the elevated frame of the preceding line has been abused.

The form πεπόνηκα in line 820 is perhaps an example of unusual language. This is the first occurrence of the perfect indicative active of the verb in extant Greek literature, and even into the fourth century the use of πονέω in the perfect tense, only ever occurring in prose, is generally limited to the participle form: Xen. *Cyr.* 4.5.22.2 πεπόνηκας, Hipp. *Salubr.* 66.32 πεπονήκῃ, and *Nat. Hom.* 14.6 πεπονήκασιν being the only exceptions.[15] It ought to be borne in mind, however, that the paucity of occurrences of this verb-form may simply be ascribable to the fact that most verbs are found relatively seldom in the perfect tense. Presumably the effect of unusual language here is to unsettle the listener and/or heighten his awareness of the text. Indeed, the use of the unusual πεπόνηκα may strike the listener in such a way as to lead him to perceive the text as lying in a 'Playful' frame. 820 might even be rated as humorous on the grounds that the frame 'Grandeur' has been broken by bathos.[16]

The use of κομιδῇ as an adverb to mean 'entirely', 'completely' is best regarded as neutral-cum-colloquial: it is absent from elevated verse but a

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[14]Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, suggests that this may be 'a final allusion to the story of Bellerophon, who was crippled by his fall from heaven'.

[15]Outside Arist. *MM* 7-11 (6 occurrences), the perfect participle is found in the Aristotelian corpus at *Pol.* 1310a24; *Prob.* 868b13; 962b36; and elsewhere in the classical era at Hipp. *Coac.* 595.2; Pl. *Rep.* 619d4; Theophr. *HP* 3.7.1; *CP* 4.12.1; Xen. *Cyr.* 7.2.11; *Eq.* 3.11.3; 3.11.5.

[16]For text as lying in a 'Playful' frame but not as 'humorous', see Chapter 1, p.34-9.

common item in both prose authors and Old Comedy. The form σκέλει is also non-elevated. The employment of the dual noun is standard Attic usage at this period: it is, for example, always used in inscriptions in preference to the plural until 409 BC.[17] In tragedy, however, duals for parts of the body are, with few exceptions, restricted to χεροῖν and ποδοῖν.[18] This avoidance of the dual by tragedians is most likely due to the fact that it was considered peculiarly Athenian and thus undignified. As Bers comments, the preservation of the dual in Attic is to be regarded as a 'conspicuous archaism' at this time.[19]

After the subdued piece of frame abuse in 820 come some clear instances of humour in lines 821-3. Trygaios' assertion of 821 - μικροὶ δ' ὁρᾶν ἄνωθεν ἦστ' - is followed by the statement:

ἔμοιγέ τοι
ἀπὸ τοὐρανοῦ 'φαίνεσθε κακοήθεις πάνυ
ἐντευθενὶ δὲ πολύ τι κακοηθέστεροι.

Aristophanes presents his audience with κακοήθεις as παρὰ προσδοκίαν for μικροί, thus potentially violating a number of maxims, most notably (3) 'be relevant'. κακοηθέστεροι in line 823 may also be said to come παρὰ προσδοκίαν. Trygaios might be expected to say how much bigger rather than how much worse the audience appears up close.[20] Expectations are thus violated, or in terms of my model, frame abuse has occurred.

The structure of lines 821-3 bears a certain similarity to that of 819-20. In each case a non-humorous statement is followed by a humorous one, both the

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[17]Meisterhans 1900, 191; Cuny 1906, 78-82 and 162; Bers 1984, 59; Olson 1998 on 324-5.

[18]For exceptions to this rule see Bers 1984, 60, who also gives statistics concerning usage of the dual and plural in tragedy and comedy.

[19]Ibid., 59. As Meillet 1913, 208, notes, the dual was never employed by Ionic poets. In the case of tragedians he suggests, ibid., 'en évitant partiellement le duel, usuel dans le parler courant de leurs concitoyens, les poètes donnaient à leurs écrits un aspect littéraire, ils évitaient le ton local qui nuit aussi bien à la dignité.'

[20]Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, suggests that μικροὶ...ἦστ' (821) is a 'seemingly innocuous remark converted into an insult when a second interpretation ("petty" vel sim.; cf. *Eq.* 788) is forced on the adj. in the words that follow.'

latter remarks beginning ἔγωγέ τοι... . What is more, the initial, non-humorous comments are both made in tragic-compatible metre: 819 contains a resolution of the first princeps (which is not uncommon in tragedy, especially after a 'long' anceps), and the rhythm of 821 is strictly tragic-compatible, the two lines containing a penthemimeral and a hephthemimeral caesura respectively. The rhythm of the lines containing the humorous statements could scarcely be called 'tragic-compatible', however. In line 820 there are resolutions of the second anceps and fourth princeps as well as a violation of Porson's law. Line 822 contains resolutions of the first anceps and fourth princeps, and 823 of the third and fourth princeps, its second metron comprising only light syllables.[21]

The lexical features employed in 821-3 complement the metrical dip in tone in these lines. The diction of 821 is neutral. The use of μικρός with the infinitive of ὁράω is a neutral feature (and perfectly standard),[22] as is the item ἄνωθεν. In contrast, 822-3 contain a number of less elevated items. κακοήθης, for example, is an adjective absent from tragedy and lyric but found in Plato (*Rep.* 401b4), Aristotle (*HA* 613b23) and the orators (Dem. 18.11).[23] ἐντευθενί is certainly a low item, its only two occurrences outside Old Comedy coming at Dem. 26.5 and Lys. 13.67.[24] The idiom πολύ τι (which Sommerstein translates 'a good deal') may also be non-elevated, although to be sure its categorization causes a certain amount of difficulty. At first glance, the phrase would seem to be less rather than more elevated since it occurs only once outside prose - at Soph. *Phil.* 838. Complications arise, however, from the fact that πολύ τι in this Sophoklean passage is a conjecture (Hermann's) and that the passage in which it occurs is composed in lyric metre. If the conjecture is wrong, the phrase almost certainly has a colloquial tinge; if right, it may be better classed as neutral.

Line 822 also contains an instance of prodelision (aphaeresis), 'φαίνεσθε. Prodelision is a common feature of dramatic language, found in both tragedy and comedy alike (the nearest parallels to this occurrence being Soph. *OC* 974

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[21]See West 1982, 81-2, for data on the frequency of such resolutions.

[22]On this construction, see Kühner-Gerth 1898, 2.2.15b who also give a list of further examples.

[23]This is also true of its cognates. The adjective is used frequently in a quasi-technical sense in the Hippokratic corpus to mean 'malignant'; e.g. *Aph.* 6.4; *Prog.* 20.

[24]For statistical data on the provenance of the deictic iota in Attic, see the table at Dover 1997, 64.

'φάνην and *Ant.* 457 'φάνη).[25] Prodelision may have been a feature of the spoken language, but if so it is one very rarely reproduced in inscriptions[26] or by prose authors: even in Plato where prodelision is occasionally found, it is almost exclusively restricted to the initial ἐ– of ἐκεῖνος.[27] It is unknown in Homer and Hesiod and rare in lyric, whereas it occurs on average once every 43 lines in Aristophanes, once every 77 lines in Sophokles.[28]

These lines, then, contain subdued instances of frame abuse. As we have seen, the restraint Aristophanes shows in 819 and 821 in his use of language and metre evaporates in the lines which immediately follow. In terms of the model, we might say that Aristophanes first generates in the listener the mild expectation of verse of a slightly (if not wholly) elevated nature, but subsequently fails to maintain the frame he has established. In these lines the heightening (and subsequent lowering) of metre and diction occur in tandem and thus complement each other. Later on in the passage, however, we shall meet instances where the tone of the metre and diction 'clash' rather than 'coincide'.

Aside from some very faint jingles, the only sound effect in these lines worthy of mention is the repeated /oi/ at the end of 821 (ἔμοιγέ τοι), which is picked up at the end of 823 (κακοηθέστεροι). As discussed in the previous chapter, end-line rhyme is more characteristic of low than elevated verse.

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[25]In tragedy the word suffering prodelision occurs most frequently in the sixth 'foot' and next most commonly in the fifth, a tendency not aped by comedy. On the prodelision of the augment in tragedy, see Collard 1975 on Eur. *Supp.* 156 and Platnauer 1960, 143.

[26]Threatte 1980, 426, says that the few examples of prodelision which exist in Attic inscriptions 'look more like careless omissions than true cases of prodelision'.

[27]See the examples given by Kühner-Gerth 1898, 1.1.242 n.1.

[28]Platnauer 1960. For a brief survey and discussion of prodelision, see Kühner-Gerth 1898, 1.1.240-3. Devine and Stephens 1994, 270, also note that prodelision is 'constrained in the stricter styles of verse'. Platnauer remarks (143) that, in tragedy, messenger speeches are a favourite repository for verbs with prodelided augments. There is no hint that the *topos* of the messenger speech is the subject of pastiche or parody here, however.

824-37

Οι. ὦ δέσποθ', ἥκεις; Τρ. ὡς ἐγὼ 'πυθόμην τινός.
Οι. τί δ' ἔπαθες; Τρ. ἤλγουν τὼ σκέλει μακρὰν ὁδὸν
διεληλυθώς.
Οι. ἴθι νυν κάτειπέ μοι –
Τρ. τὸ τί;
Οι. ἄλλον τιν' εἶδες ἄνδρα κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα
πλανώμενον πλὴν σαυτόν;
Τρ. οὔκ, εἰ μή γέ που
ψυχὰς δύ' ἢ τρεῖς διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων.
Οι. τί δ' ἕδρων;
Τρ. ξυνελέγοντ' ἀναβολὰς ποτώμεναι
τὰς ἐνδιαεριαυρενηχέτους τινάς.
Οι. οὐκ ἦν ἄρ' οὐδ' ἃ λέγουσι, κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα
ὡς ἀστέρες γιγνόμεθ', ὅταν τις ἀποθάνῃ;
Τρ. μάλιστα.
Οι. καὶ τίς ἐστιν ἀστὴρ νῦν ἐκεῖ;
Τρ. Ἴων ὁ Χῖος, ὅσπερ ἐποίησεν πάλαι
ἐνθάδε τὸν Ἀοῖόν ποθ'· ὡς δ' ἦλθ', εὐθέως
Ἀοῖον αὐτὸν πάντες ἐκάλουν ἀστέρα.

Between lines 824 and 855, the servant questions Trygaios about his journey to the gods. Almost the whole exchange between these characters consists of questions and answers. At 855, the servant makes what is only his second direct statement of the episode, which is followed by a choral song and a change of conversational topic. The structure of this exchange echoes similar scenes in tragedy between two characters, where one temporarily assumes the rôle of questioner, the other of answerer (e.g. Soph. *Aj.* 38-50: Odysseus questioning Ajax; Soph. *El.* 875-90: Electra questioning Khrysothemis). For the purposes of the current discussion this dialogue has been divided into three sections: 824-37, 838-46 and 839-55.

The exchange between Trygaios and the servant is reminiscent of a dialogue between a 'straight man' and a 'funny man' in a comedy double-act, the servant asking questions which might ostensibly be classed as 'serious', and

Trygaios giving playful answers, many of which might be classed as 'humorous'. The first question and answer exchange exemplifies this well (824):

Οι. ὦ δέσποθ', ἥκεις;
Τρ. ὡς ἐγὼ 'πυθόμην τινός.

The servant has asked what Merry describes as 'a silly conventional question' to which Aristophanes has Trygaios reply.[29] At the very least, the convoluted phrasing of Trygaios' answer serves to rouse in a listener all the expectations associated with a 'Playful' frame - its unusual phrasing is even noted by the scholiast who remarks that ὡς ἐγὼ 'πυθόμην τινός comes in place of ὡς νομίζω (RVΓ). There are, moreover, a number of reasons why Trygaios' response could be judged humorous by a listener. It could be thought to have broken the frame of 'Rhetorical Questions' and/or to have violated maxims such as (1) 'make your contribution as informative as is required' or (4a) 'avoid obscurity of expression'.

The following lines comprise a further example of a humorous exchange. The servant asks (825):

τί δ' ἔπαθες;

to which Trygaios then replies (825-6):

ἤλγουν τὼ σκέλει μακρὰν ὁδὸν
διεληλυθώς.

In these lines, the 'connector' or 'locus' of the humour is the word ἔπαθες.[30] The verb πάσχω represents two lexemes, πάσχω[1] = 'experience' and πάσχω[2] = 'suffer'. The humour relies on the fact that a listener would more naturally construct the meaning of the question through reference to πάσχω[1], that is, he would take the sentence to mean roughly, 'What happened to you?'. Trygaios' reply, however, is to a question whose meaning is constructed through reference to πάσχω[2]. In terms of the model of humour perception, Trygaios' reply could be said to have forced the listener to reassess the question's status as unitary

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[29]Merry 1900, *ad loc.*

[30]For a definition of 'connector' / 'locus' see Chapter 1, p.14.

discourse. The listener who categorizes the exchange as humorous does so by judging the servant's question to have violated maxim (4b) 'avoid ambiguity'. Perhaps, too, a listener would consider Trygaios' reply to have violated maxims such as (1) 'make your contribution as informative as is required' or (3) 'be relevant'.

The slave begins a new question at 826, only to be interrupted by Trygaios:

Οι. ἴθι νυν κάτειπέ μοι –
Τρ. τὸ τί;

The use of τό plus interrogative is a feature of the spoken language, but not overly colloquial: τὸ ποῖον; is even employed by Sophokles (*El.* 671; cf. *OC* 893 τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα;).[31] This said, the use of τό plus τί in this way is restricted to Aristophanes (*Vesp.* 818; *Nub.* 748, 775; *Pax* 696 and *Pl.* 902) and so is best categorized as a low, colloquial feature.[32] Depending on an actor's delivery of τὸ τί the interruption might be judged by the listener to be either an instance of naturalistic dialogue or of Aristophanic exuberance. The interruption could hardly be classed as humorous, but by its slightly frivolous nature it could well be said to help establish (or maintain) a 'Playful' frame; that is, the text provides signals which suggest to a listener that humorous-mode discourse is on its way.[33]

Following the interruption, the slave resumes his question (827-8):

ἄλλον τιν' εἶδες ἄνδρα κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα
πλανώμενον πλὴν σαυτόν;

to which Trygaios replies at 829-30:

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[31]Starkie 1897 comments on *Vesp.* 818: 'the article marks the *lively interest* felt by the speaker.' See also Kühner-Gerth 1898, 2.1.625-6.

[32]Starkie adds, ibid., 'τὸ τί means *quid ita?* in *Ran.* 1228, *Pl.* 1076, *Av.* 1039.' There remains, of course, the (unlikely?) possibility that τὸ τί is an item of Aristophanic idiolect. Interestingly, the phrase does not appear to occur in any of the comic fragments from our era.

[33]I do not mean to imply that interruptions are always 'playful'; they also occur in tragedy such as at Soph. *OC* 479-80 and *Phil.* 814.

οὔκ, εἰ μή γέ που
ψυχὰς δύ' ἢ τρεῖς διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων.

Within the first few words maxims (4b) 'avoid ambiguity', and (4c) 'be orderly', are violated: οὔκ, εἰ μή γέ που... . That is, Trygaios' utterance reads: 'No I didn't see anyone. Except, of course...'. First comes the claim that no other men were to be seen in the sky, then the claim that other men were indeed there. The monosyllabic beginning of Trygaios' response serves to highlight that much more the presence at its end of the compound-word διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων, glossed in the singular by LSJ as 'a dithyrambic poet who trained his own chorus'.

The mention of dithyrambic poets may well rouse certain expectations in the listener since dithyrambic poetry appears to have been a favourite comic and satirical target for Aristophanes in the late 420s and 410s. The poets and their poetry are also mocked at *Birds* 904-53, *Clouds* 331-9 and most notably at *Birds* 1372-1409, where the dithyrambic poet Kinesias features as a character. In Aristophanes' hands dithyrambic poetry is characterized as containing an excessive number of adjectives; high-flown, elevated language, including most especially compound-adjectives displaying 'complex adjectival morphology',[34] and as displaying great metrical diversity. What is more, as in the present passage the sky is presented as the place where dithyrambic poets belong, since it is there they find inspiration (*Av.* 1380ff., *Nub.* 331ff.). Zimmermann comments on the appropriateness of this location: 'die Kunst der Dithyrambiker...hat ihren Platz in den Wolken...sie [hat] alle Eigenschaften der Wolken: Sie ist etwas Luftiges, Ungreifbares und Schwebendes';[35] the dithyrambic poems themselves are 'etwas Unsolides und Windiges'.[36] It ought to be added as a *caveat* that, although the paucity of dithyrambic fragments from this era makes an informed assessment difficult, Aristophanes' portrayal of dithyrambic poetry is hardly likely to constitute a wholly accurate reflection of this genre's style: at best Aristophanes *qua* parodist has heaped together and embellished the worst

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[34]Dobrov and Urios-Aparisi 1995, 165, whose comments on dithyrambic poetry and the 'new music' are also of interest (164-6).

[35]Zimmermann 1992, 119.

[36]Ibid., 120.

excesses of these poets.[37] A more extreme point of view is that of Zimmermann, who doubts that Aristophanes has been faithful to the genre at all, commenting: 'daß es für Aristophanes metrisch und stilistisch keine besonderen Kennzeichen von Dithyramben gibt, sondern daß alle chorlyrischen Genera dasselbe Stilniveau, dieselben sprachlichen und metrischen Extravaganzen aufweisen und sozusagen in einer lyrischen Koine verfaßt sind'.[38]

Certainly lines 827-31 contain features which are easily recognized as belonging to the Aristophanic tradition of dithyrambic parody. As we shall see, the lines contain compound-words, poetic syntax and a flurry of elevated lexemes. Fittingly, it is a compound-word, διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων, which introduces the subject of dithyrambic poetry. This lexeme is a *hapax legomenon* in the canon, but is unlikely to have struck a listener as particularly 'unusual' for the following reasons. The concept of 'teaching' performed poetry such as dithyrambs is well-established (e.g. Herodotos' description of Arion (1.23) as: διθύραμβον πρῶτον ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν ποιήσαντά τε καὶ ὀνομάσαντα καὶ διδάξαντα ἐν Κορίνθῳ) and similar lexemes such as τραγῳδοδιδάσκαλος and κωμῳδοδιδάσκαλος are well attested in the classical era. One suspects that this lexeme may not be an Aristophanic coinage at all, but whatever the case, the use of a lengthy compound-word like διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων, original or not, is certainly in keeping with Aristophanes' other parodies of dithyrambs. Moreover, it is not long before we encounter a compound-word *par excellence*. The couple's next exchange is as follows (831-2):

Οι. τί δ' ἔδρων;
Τρ. ξυνελέγοντ' ἀναβολὰς ποτώμεναι
τὰς ἐνδιαεριαυρενηχέτους τινάς.

In 832, following the 'highly poetic' ποτάομαι,[39] and sandwiched between

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[37]On 'accumulation' and 'distortion' as ingredients of parody, see Silk 1993, 482ff. Aristophanes' treatment of dithyrambic poetry would no doubt qualify as an example of Silk's 'deconstructive parody' (490ff.).

[38]Zimmermann 1992, 118-9.

[39]Platnauer 1964, *ad loc.* The lexeme is restricted to elevated verse and Aristophanes. It is an Aristophanic favourite occurring also at Ar. *Av.* 251, 1445; *Lys.* 1013; *Nub.* 319 (and perhaps *Av.* 1338).

the elevated τὰς...τινάς (cf. Soph. *OT* 107 and *OC* 288-9),[40] comes the adjective ἐνδιαεριαυρενηχέτους.[41] The elements from which this word is made up are certainly more rather than less elevated. νήχω/νήχομαι, for instance, 'to swim', is a lexeme found only in epic in our era;[42] the adjective ἔνδιος, 'midday', only in Homer.[43] The compound-word also contains the element ἀήρ repeated in its Aeolic form of αὐήρ.[44] ἀήρ is hardly a poetic lexeme (it occurs in Aineias Tacticus, for example),[45] but in 421 BC may well have evoked associations with philosophy - there are numerous discussions of ἀήρ in the Presocratics, the most famous of which are probably those of Anaximenes, who ἀρχὴν τῶν ὄντων ἄερα ἀπεφήνατο.[46] The presence of unusual and poetic textual features no doubt alerts the listener all the more to the fact that the text is parodic. In terms of the model of humour perception, these features act as signals to the listener that the text is to be perceived as lying in a 'Playful' frame.

As we have seen, the presence of compound-adjectives, elevated lexemes and mention of the air are all stock elements of Aristophanes' parody of dithyrambic poetry. It ought to be added that, like Sokrates and Strepsiades at *Clouds* 331-9, it is as if Trygaios cannot help but express himself in the manner of dithyrambic poets when discussing their poetry. Aristophanes' concern is to

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As Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1927) comments at *Lys*. 1013, πωτᾶσθαι is found 'nur...bei Homer und Nachahmern'.

[40]At *OC* 288-9, Jebb (1886) suggests: 'the article implies that the person exists; the indefinite pronoun that his name is unknown.' The phrase also occurs at Pl. *Leg*. 716a4-5, where England 1921, *ad loc.*, comments differently: 'Plato is archaizing here on purpose, and uses ὅ τις, the Epic form of ὅστις.'

[41]Various alternative readings have been suggested for ἐνδιαεριαυρενηχέτους. A major sticking point is the fact that the iota of ἔνδιος is always long in Homer. See Platnauer 1964, *ad loc.*, on the conjectures and problems associated with this word, and cf. Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, who prints εὐδιαεριαυερινηχέτους. A similar compound-adjective is to be found at *Nub*. 337, ἀερονηχεῖς.

[42]Such as at *Od*. 5.375; 7.276; 14.352; *ps*.-Hes. *Sc*. 211, 317. It is used by later prose authors, such as Pausanias and Plutarch.

[43]*Il*. 11.726; *Od*. 4.450.

[44]LSJ, s. v.

[45]Aen. Tact. 23.1. It also occurs eight times in Herodotos as ἠέρα, etc. (never in the nominative, though): 1.172; 2.25, 26; 3.124; 4.7, 31, 62; 5.105.

[46]*Fr*. 2 Diels. See also other fragments and testimonia in Diels and Kranz 1951.

enact the parody through his characters and not (as discussed in Chapter Two) to achieve consistency of characterization.

The sound effects of these lines are also of interest. At 828, the listener's attention is first focused on aural features by the presence of initial alliteration in /pl/ and marginally by the faintly perceptible repetition of the final phoneme /n/ - πλανώμενον πλὴν σαυτόν.[47] The alliteration in this line may serve to make the listener more aware of another sound effect, that is the line's rhythm. Rhythmically, 828 is strictly tragic-compatible, containing as it does a penthemimeral caesura and no resolutions. Similarly, the first two metra of 829 are strictly tragic-compatible, with the line also containing a penthemimeral caesura. The last metron, however, contains an untragic anapaest in the fifth 'foot', a feature which the strictly tragic nature of the preceding metra renders all the more noticeable. As a result of this, attention is drawn to the fact that the compound-word διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων scans as a glyconic (oo—UU—U—).

The rhythm of this word would scarcely be noteworthy were it not for the fact that the metrical playfulness continues. The first two words of Trygaios' next response - ξυνελέγοντ' ἀναβολὰς - can be scanned as two metra of a metre known as 'first paean' (UUU—) (first paean usually occurs in the rhythm —UUU but on occasion as UUU—: as here, a caesura usually occurs after each metron). It is significant that the second word of this response, ἀναβολή, is a quasi-technical term signifying a 'prelude' to a dithyrambic ode (*Av.* 1385, cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1409b25-30),[48] for this means that the lexemes Aristophanes has used associated with dithyrambic poetry (namely διθυραμβοδιδασκάλος and ἀναβολή) are both employed in ways that stress the fact that their rhythm is compatible with non-iambic metres.

Should these metrical peculiarities be noticed by a listener, they would in all probability impinge as playful allusions to the metrical diversity of

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[47]The rhyming endings of Trygaios' utterance (829, διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων) and that of the servant (830, ἔδρων) may serve to extend this focus.

[48]It is interesting to note at *Birds* 1385 the occurrence of ἀναβολή alongside a word of similar rhythm, as at *Peace* 830: the phrase νιφοβόλους ἀναβολάς may thus also be scanned as two metra of first paeans (UUU— | UUU—). On ἀναβολή, see Dunbar 1995, *ad loc.* This lexeme also occurs in Eup. *fr.* 81 K.-A. and at Pi. *P.* 1.3/4 (ἀμβολά); cf. ἀνεβάλλετο at *Od.* 1.55 and 8.266.

dithyrambic poetry. To judge from the dithyrambic fragments of Pindar and Bakkhylides, poems of this genre displayed much metrical variety, employing a wide range of metres in unpredictable ways.[49] To be sure, glyconics appear regularly in fragments of fifth-century dithyrambs (a claim which can hardly be made for first paeans, however),[50] but this is hardly the point. More important is that this metrical exuberance is a stock and central feature of Aristophanes' parodic treatment of dithyrambic poetry and in this respect is a natural accompaniment to the elevated language and compound-words of this passage. The supposed metrical extravagance of dithyrambic poets features most noticeably in the *Birds*, where Kinesias is portrayed as having difficulty restricting his speech to iambic trimeters (1372ff.). Whilst his initial utterances are in choriambs (some of which have the strange first metron UU—UU),[51] at 1380, it looks as though he will produce an iambic trimeter, since his utterance begins ὄρνις γενέσθαι βούλομαι... . Yet after these two strictly tragic-compatible iambic metra (up to the end of the second metron the line contains no resolutions as well as a penthemimeral caesura), the verse ends with a pherecratean (U— —UU— —), λιγύφθογγος ἀηδών. To be sure, Aristophanes' use of metre is less striking in the current *Peace* passage, but it is, I think, nevertheless appropriate to remark on the metrical flourishes with which we are presented here. For the listener such flourishes doubtless add to the exuberant - 'playful' - character of the text. Certainly they make an important contribution to the rich and varied texture of Aristophanes' verse.

832-7 represents an involved instance of humour, the subject of which is Ion of Khios, a recently deceased poet, who, the scholiasts on this passage remind us, composed tragedy and epigrams (RVΓ), and one of whose compositions concerned the day-star, ἀοῖος...ἀστήρ (V). At 832-3 a question is posed to which a humorous answer might be expected, an expectation which is, however, for the time being unfulfilled (832-4):

Οι. οὐκ ἦν ἄρ' οὐδ' ἃ λέγουσι, κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα
ὡς ἀστέρες γιγνόμεθ', ὅταν τις ἀποθάνῃ;

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[49]For metrical analyses of fifth-century dithyrambs, see Zimmermann 1992.

[50]Glyconics appear in a number of poems, such as Pindar's *fr*. 75 Snell (the metrical analysis of which appears at Zimmermann 1992, 55-6, *fr*. 70b) and Bakkhylides' *Theseus* (Zimmermann 1992, 110).

[51]On which see Ruijgh 1960, 320-2.

Τρ. μάλιστα.

The next exchange sees the fulfilment of this expectation, however (834-7):[52]

Οι. καὶ τίς ἐστιν ἀστὴρ νῦν ἐκεῖ;
Τρ. Ἴων ὁ Χῖος, ὅσπερ ἐποίησεν πάλαι
ἐνθάδε τὸν Ἀοῖόν ποθ'· ὡς δ' ἦλθ', εὐθέως
Ἀοῖον αὐτὸν πάντες ἐκάλουν ἀστέρα.

Trygaios' low μάλιστα (834) comes to form part of a line whose rhythm begins in a tragic-compatible way - 834 contains no resolutions and is complete with penthemimeral caesura - but which ends with a violation of Porson's law. The rest of Trygaios' response (835-7) contains a number of resolutions less rather than more typical of tragic metre, and culminates in another violation of Porson's law in 837. The lines also contain some faint jingles - /s/ and /t/ in 834 (μάλιστα...τίς ἐστιν ἀστὴρ); /p/ in 835 (ὅσπερ ἐποίησεν πάλαι); /th/ (θ) in 836 (ἐνθάδε...ποθ'...ἦλθ'...εὐθέως) and /a/ in 837 ('Αοῖον... πάντες ἐκάλουν ἀστέρα).

The logic of Trygaios' reply runs: (i) we become stars when we die; (ii) Ion wrote a poem about the day-star; (iii) in Aristophanes poets are like their works;[53] therefore: (iv) Ion on dying has become the day-star. The logic abuses maxim (2a) 'do not say what you believe to be implausible'. Trygaios' previous reply of μάλιστα (824) also helps maintain the passage's 'Playful' frame since it breaks the exchange's pattern of question plus humorous reply. Depending on its delivery, this μάλιστα may even be judged humorous on the grounds that maxim (1) 'make your contribution as informative as is required' has been violated.

838-46

Οι. τίνες γάρ εἰσ' οἱ διατρέχοντες ἀστέρες,
οἳ καόμενοι θέουσιν;

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[52]I have avoided Olson's ἐπόησεν for ἐποίησεν in 835 (1998, *ad loc.*). ~~as it necessitates a rather inelegant split resolution of an anapaest in the fourth 'foot'~~.

[53]Cf. my appendix below.

Τρ. ἀπὸ δείπνου τινὲς
τῶν πλουσίων οὗτοι βαδίζουσ' ἀστέρων
ἰπνοὺς ἔχοντες, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἰπνοῖσι πῦρ.
ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' ὡς τάχιστα ταυτηνὶ λαβών,
καὶ τὴν πύελον κατάκλυζε καὶ θέρμαιν' ὕδωρ,
στόρνυ τ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τῇδε κουρίδιον λέχος·
καὶ ταῦτα δράσας ἧκε δεῦρ' αὖθις πάλιν.
ἐγὼ δ' ἀποδώσω τήνδε τῇ βουλῇ τέως.

Lines 838-41 comprise a humorous exchange similar to others in this dialogue, in that a question from the slave elicits a humorous reply from Trygaios. Trygaios' explanation of the nature of shooting stars - διατρέχοντες ἀστέρες - would potentially violate a number of the maxims of speech, most prominently (2) 'do not say what you believe to be implausible'. It ought to be noted that διατρέχοντες ἀστέρες is unique: elsewhere shooting stars are referred to as ᾄττοντας...ἀστέρας (Pl. *Rep.* 621b, cf. ἀστέρες διάττωσιν, *ps.*-Arist. *Prob.* 26.23)[54] and διαθέοντες ἀστέρες (Arist. *Meteor.* 1.4). The paucity of references to this *res* makes an assessment of the nature of the various *signa* problematic. It may be the case that διατρέχοντες ἀστέρες was a standard way of referring to shooting stars and that the lexemes employed by Plato and Aristotle are either 'technical' or simply alternative terms. The possibility cannot be ruled out, however, that we have here an example of an Aristophanic coinage.[55] The slave's question is one for which a scientific, or quasi-scientific, serious-mode answer might plausibly be provided. However, a humorous-mode answer is offered instead. If the phrase is in fact novel, it might usefully be thought of as arousing faint expectations in the listener that a novel reply to the question will follow. In other words, the phrase may help to establish a 'Playful' frame for the text.

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[54]ἀστέρες διάττοντες was probably the term employed by Anaxagoras as well; it is used by other authors in connection with his work, e.g. Diog. 2.9. *Pace* Olson on *Pax* 838, αἶγες and δαλοί, referred to at Arist. *Meteor.* 341b3 and 341b28, would appear to be something more specific than, or different from, shooting stars. Presumably a shooting star is the *res* connoted by διοπετὴς...ἀστήρ at Eur. *fr.* 971 Nauck.

[55]On the images and word-play in this line, see Taillardat 1965, 34, who suggests, *inter alia*, that Aristophanes is conflating a traditional poetic image of stars as torches with the concept that stars are (or at least once *were*) people, such as Ion.

An interesting problem arises in 841 in the shape of ἰπνός (sometimes spelt ἰπνός). LSJ lists four separate meanings for this word: I. *oven, furnace*; II. *the place of the oven*, i.e *the kitchen*; III. *lantern*; IV. = κοπρών, *dunghill, privy*. Let us look at meaning III in more detail, under which these occurrences in the *Peace* are listed:

> ἰπνός III. *lantern*, Ar. *Pax* 841, *Pl.* 815, *SIG* 1027.13 (Cos iv/iii B. C.), Ael. *NA* 2.8.

What the LSJ entry only hints at is that outside Aristophanes there are no uses of this lexeme in the pre-Hellenistic canon. So, we surmise, we have here either an item of Aristophanic idiolect or of colloquial Attic. Well, maybe. But maybe not. Before we opt for this conclusion, let us first take a closer look at the occurrence of ἰπνός at *Ploutos* 815 with a critical eye as to what the word signifies there. Then let us consider the lexeme in the light of the suggestions concerning ἰπνός put forward by Chadwick in his *Lexicographica Graeca* (1996).

In the *Ploutos*, ἰπνός appears in a passage where the slave, Karion, is describing the effects that wealth (Ploutos) has had on the household - the stores are full of barley, the jars of wine, the pots of silver and gold. At 813-5 the rotten fish-dishes are described as now looking silver and the ἰπνός as having become ivory:

> Κα. τοὺς δὲ πινακίσκους τοὺς σαπροὺς
> τοὺς ἰχθυηροὺς ἀργυροῦς πάρεσθ' ὁρᾶν.
> ὁ δ' ἰπνὸς γέγον' ἡμῖν ἐξαπίνης ἐλεφάντινος.

Amongst those who agree with the verdict of LSJ on ἰπνός is Rogers, who states that 'the word...in this passage...no doubt means a lantern'.[56] Scholiasts on the passage are less sure, however. In addition to λαμπτήρ (Pald), their mixed bag of suggestions for the meaning of ἰπνός include μαγειρεῖον (RVMEθNBarbRsAld), 'kitchen'; χυτρόπους (V), 'pot-stand' and δίφρος (V), 'night-stool'. Indeed, any of the items to which LSJ suggest ἰπνός can refer might feasibly be described as having become ἐλεφάντινος. In sum, there is no tidy solution in the problem of the signification of ἰπνός at *Pl.* 815 (*pace* LSJ and Rogers) and one is forced to

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[56]Rogers 1907, *ad loc.*

conclude that whilst it *may* have signified 'lantern' for an audience member at *Pl.* 815, there is no reason for us to believe it did so.

In contrast to the authorities cited, Chadwick argues that, 'the essential feature of a classical ἰπνός is that it contained its own source of heat'.[57] Chadwick not only rejects LSJ's lexeme ἰπνός = 'dunghill, privy' (IV) but also proposes a sophisticated notion of the *res* we encounter at *Peace* 841. He says that there 'are some examples where an ἰπνός is a source of light, and is...misleadingly translated "lantern"' and continues, 'in the ancient world lighting out of doors was always a problem.... The solution adopted was to make a portable version of the ἰπνός, a vessel enclosing a pan of charcoal embers, which would glow the more brightly the stronger the wind.'[58] Chadwick's explanation of the nature of these contraptions accounts very satisfactorily for the playful image conjured up at 841. If someone were to walk in the windy sky, their ἰπνός would no doubt glow brightly and emit sparks and embers in a way reminiscent of a shooting star.

Assuming that Chadwick's suggestions are correct, there is every reason to believe that Aristophanes has employed the lexeme ἰπνός = 'proto-lantern' at *Peace* 841 and perhaps elsewhere, such as at *Ploutos* 815. The nature of our evidence might also lead us to suspect that ἰπνοί were rare and/or luxury items in fifth-century Athens. After all, not only does Trygaios state that it is rich stars who have these 'proto-lanterns', but also adds that they contain fire - ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἰπνοῖσι πῦρ - a level of detail superfluous to the requirements of an Athenian audience well used to the lexeme ἰπνός = 'proto-lantern'. What is more, if the reference in the *Ploutos* is to a 'proto-lantern' then the fact that such items were rare or expensive would account for the fact that Karion's household possesses just one ἰπνός. Of course, the question as to whether or not these contraptions were uncommon in fifth-century Athens must be left open, but suffice to say, if indeed the *res* is rare, the lexeme may merit classification as 'unusual'.[59]

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[57]Chadwick 1996, 163.

[58]Ibid., 164.

[59]There does remain the interesting possibility that ἰπνός does indeed signify 'proto-lantern', but was not an Attic lexeme: that is, in ἰπνός we have an example of an Aristophanic γλῶσσα. Of course, this can be little more than a bold conjecture, but is nonetheless felicitous for two reasons. First, it fits neatly with the three other secure provenances of this lexeme: it occurs once in an inscription from

If ἰπνός is indeed a rare or luxury item, its use at *Peace* 841 might usefully be thought of as adding to the elevated nature of Trygaios' reply. At the beginning of his response, the diction is neutral (save maybe for ἰπνός) and the metre gradually tightens: whereas in 840 there is a midline caesura and violation of Porson's law (but no resolutions), 841 is strictly tragic-compatible, complete with penthemimeral caesura. What is more, the non-standard word order,[60] the anaphora (ἀστέρες, 838; ἀστέρων, 840: ἰπνούς and ἰπνοῖσι, both 841) and the dative plural in -οισι may all help to lend a splash of poetic colour.[61] However, as we have almost come to expect, Aristophanes breaks this heightened frame in a playful fashion - in 842 we meet the colloquial ταυτηνί, the bathetic deictic iota of which serves as a princeps in what is metrically a perfectly tragic-compatible line.

> ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' ὡς τάχιστα ταυτηνὶ λαβών,
> καὶ τὴν πύελον κατάκλυζε καὶ...

From here on Aristophanes' use of metre becomes more playful still. In 843 there is a metrical dip in tone in that we are presented with an untragic second foot anapaest in the form of πύελος, a lexeme which is itself an unelevated item of diction.[62] The metre continues to be less-rather-than-more tragic-compatible in that we immediately meet another anapaest - the first three syllables of κατάκλυζε.

Kos; once in Oppian (*H.* 5.430), and once in Ailian (several centuries later) where it is presented as a Boiotian word requiring explanation. Certainly it occurs in no extant Attic author besides Aristophanes. Secondly, this would also account for Trygaios' 'explanation' - ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἰπνοῖσι πῦρ: if ἰπνός is indeed a γλῶσσα, then Aristophanes might simply be jogging the audience's memory as to the lexeme's meaning.

[60]See Denniston 1952, 50ff. on the reasons behind and effects of hyperbaton.

[61]Perhaps the most reliable indication of the non-standard character of -οισι for Aristophanes' audience is the fact it appears only twice in inscriptions after 444 BC: Roberts and Gardner 1905, 5; cf. Meisterhans 1900, 126. The ending appears only occasionally in Plato (e.g. *Rep.* 560e, μεγάλοισι) but here too would most likely have struck a listener as Ionic or archaic. See also Kühner-Gerth 1898, 1.1.384-5, 394 and 398.

[62]Other occurrences in our canon include Ar. *Eq.* 1062; Eup. *fr.* 272 K.-A.; PMG 905 (a skolion) and Hipp. *Acut.* 18.12 (although the spelling of this latter occurrence may be πύαλος).

κατακλύζω is a word which merits brief discussion. In the classical era, this verb is most commonly used to signify 'to flood' or 'to deluge' either literally (as at Hdt. 13.12, κατακλύζοντος...τοῦ Νείλου) or metaphorically (as at Aesch. *Sept*. 1078 πόλιν...ἀλλοδαπῶν/κύματι φωτῶν/κατακλυσθῆναι). It can also signify 'to wash out' as at Pi. *O* 4.38 and 10.10 (ὁρᾶτ' ὧν νῦν ψᾶφον ἑλισσομέναν / ὅπᾳ κῦμα κατακλύσσει ῥέον). However, LSJ lists a further meaning in the light of the occurrence of κατακλύζω at *Peace* 843:

> κατακλύζω III. *fill full of water*, τὴν πύελον Ar. *Pax* 843

The question presents itself whether our evidence justifies the listing of a separate lexeme for this occurrence of κατακλύζω, and if so, how this lexeme would have struck a listener. In line with LSJ it is, I believe, prudent to think of the use of κατακλύζω at *Peace* 843 as differing from most other pre-Hellenistic uses of the word, although the meaning proffered perhaps fails to capture the lexeme's tone. Arguably, what we have here is a colloquial usage of κατακλύζω, one which differs slightly from its standard usage in prose, but in a way not untypical of spoken idiom. This usage does, after all, bear one of the hallmarks of colloquial language, namely exaggeration, and thus to 'κατακλύζειν' a bath might usefully be thought of as belonging to the same family of phenomena as to 'die' of laughter. And so the word here is probably used to signify something in the order of 'swamp', 'make swim', or more prosaically, 'fill with a lot of liquid', 'fill full with liquid'. Furthermore, that κατακλύζω possessed this colloquial sense in the fifth century is lent support, I believe, by a similar use at Eur. *Cyc*. 677, where the Kyklops tells how he was 'swamped' with wine and thus undone (676-6):[63]

> Κυ. ὁ ξένος ἵν' ὀρθῶς ἐκμάθῃς μ' ἀπώλεσεν,
> ὁ μιαρός, ὅς μοι δοὺς τὸ πῶμα κατέκλυσεν.

Assuming that κατάκλυζω is indeed a colloquial item, the two anapaestic feet of 844 coincide with unelevated lexical items (πύελον and κατάκλυζε). Following this metrical and lexical dip, however, the metre once again tightens, the last metron of 844 and the first two metra of 845 being strictly tragic-

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[63]κατέκλυσεν is in fact Canter's universally approved emendation for κατέκαυσεν (L).

compatible (844-5). Note also that just as the metre tightens, attention is thrown on this line by the morpheme-initial alliteration in /k/ - κατά–κλυζε καί ... . The text continues:

> ...θέρμαιν' ὕδωρ,
> στόρνυ τ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τῇδε κουρίδιον λέχος.

Interestingly, the metrical elevation in these lines is accompanied by Homeric associations which are aroused gradually, and ever more strongly, by a combination of diction and subject matter. For instance, whilst θερμαίνω is a neutral lexeme, its use in the context of heating a bath might evoke, albeit faintly, a Homeric passage such as *Il*. 14.5-7, where Nestor bids Makhaon, the son of Asklepios, have a bath warmed for him so that his wounds may be cleaned:

> ἄλλὰ σὺ μὲν νῦν πῖνε καθήμενος αἴθοπα οἶνον,
> εἰς ὅ κε θερμὰ λοετρὰ ἐϋπλόκαμος Ἑκαμήδη
> θερμήνῃ καὶ λούσῃ ἄπο βρότον αἱματόεντα.

Moreover, στόρνυμι, which occurs in 844, has even stronger Homeric associations.[64] As far as its use in the classical era is concerned, the lexeme must be regarded as more rather than less elevated, since it appears only rarely in the Attic prose of our era (and then in those authors more prone to use elevated lexemes, such as at Thuc. 2.34; Pl. *Rep*. 372b) and only once (as here) in the present tense (Xen. *Cyr*. 8.2.6). More significant, though, is the fact that στόρνυμι is a Homeric favourite and appears as here in conjunction with the elevated λέχος no fewer than eight times in the epics.[65] Two of these occurrences are found in the celebrated passage from the *Odyssey* where Penelope tests Odysseus' knowledge of their bridal bed. At *Od*. 23.171, Odysseus asks the nurse to lay out a bed for him - ἄγε μοι, μαῖα, στόρεσον λέχος - a command which Penelope subsequently repeats, slyly adding to the request that the bed be brought out too, a feat Odysseus knows to be impossible (23.177-80):[66]

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[64]The verb has a number of formal variants, on which see Fraenkel 1950, on Aesch. *Ag*. 909.

[65]*Il*. 9.621, 659, 660; 24.648; *Od*. 7.340; 23.171, 177, 291.

[66]Note the faint jingle of these lines from the *Odyssey* in the *Peace*: ἄγε μοι στόρεσον...λέχος (171); ἄγε οἱ στόρεσον...λέχος (177), cf. εἴσαγ'...στόρνυ τ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τῇδε...λέχος.

ἀλλ' ἄγε οἱ στόρεσον πυκινὸν λέχος, Εὐρύκλεια,
ἐκτὸς ἐϋσταθέος θαλάμου, τόν ῥ' αὐτὸς ἐποίει·
ἔνθα οἱ ἐκθεῖσαι πυκινὸν λέχος ἐμβάλετ' εὐνήν,
κώεα καὶ χλαίνας καὶ ῥήγεα σιγαλόεντα.

Another Homeric occurrence of στόρνυμι which merits a brief mention in connection with *Peace* 842-44 is *Iliad* 9.658-59, since there is a similarity in phraseology. Akhilleus has his servants lay a bed for Phoinix: δμωῇσι κέλευσε / Φοίνικι στόρεσαι πυκινὸν λέχος ὅττι τάχιστα (cf. ὡς τάχιστα of *Pax* 842).

The heightening of diction by the introduction of epic echoes reaches its peak at the end of 844 in that we encounter what amounts to a Homeric quotation, κουρίδιον λέχος (cf. *Il.* 15.39-40 λέχος...κουρίδιον: Hera addressing Zeus). As discussed in the previous chapter, what is remarkable about Aristophanes' employment of this heightened phrase is that its positioning generates a wholly untragic 'fifth foot' anapaest, all the more noticeable for the unresolved, tragic-compatible metra which both precede and follow. Indeed 845, the line which succeeds this playful instance of collision, can boast strictly tragic-compatible rhythm despite its neutral lexemes, relatively unelevated subject matter, and more-rather-than-less colloquial connective καί.[67]

καὶ ταυτα δράσας ἦκε δεῦρ' αὖθις πάλιν.

The rhythm of 845 thus serves to heighten the listener's awareness of the use of metre, with 844's 'fifth foot' anapaest thrown into even greater relief.

With 846, Trygaios' mini-speech ends with a flourish. This line displays heavy vocalic repetition in /ô/ and /ê/:

ἐγὼ δ' ἀποδώσω τήνδε τῇ βουλῇ τέως.

With the speech at an end, the exchange reverts to the question and answer format of before.

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[67]On so-called 'καί-style', see Dobrov 1995, 74.

To summarize briefly, in 842-4 Aristophanes establishes a heightened 'Homeric' frame only to abuse it with a bathetic metrical flourish (844). In terms of the model of humour perception we might analyse these lines as follows. In his use of the Homeric quotation (κουρίδιον λέχος), Aristophanes shows his ability to maintain the 'Homeric' frame lexically, while his positioning of the phrase - rendering as it does an abuse of Porson's law - serves to demonstrate his failure to do so. The frame abuse and use of rhythm in these lines no doubt impinge on the listener as somewhat sprightly or exuberant, that is, in terms of the model, as nested in a 'Playful' frame.

847-55

Οι. πόθεν δ' ἔλαβες ταύτας σύ;
Τρ. πόθεν; ἐκ τοὐρανοῦ.
Οι. οὐκ ἂν ἔτι δοίην τῶν θεῶν τριώβολον,
εἰ πορνοβοσκοῦσ' ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς οἱ βροτοί.
Τρ. οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κἀκεῖ ζῶσιν ἀπὸ τούτων τινές.
Οι. ἄγε νυν ἴωμεν. εἰπέ μοι, δῶ καταφαγεῖν
ταύτῃ τι;
Τρ. μηδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἐθελήσει φαγεῖν
οὔτ' ἄρτον οὔτε μᾶζαν, εἰωθυῖ' ἀεὶ
παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖσιν ἀμβροσίαν λείχειν ἄνω.
Οι. λείχειν ἄρ' αὐτῇ κἀνθάδε σκευαστέον.

At 847 the slave makes his first mention of the girls which Trygaios has brought back from the gods. He asks:

Οι. πόθεν δ' ἔλαβες ταύτας σύ;

These girls may well have been on stage since Trygaios' return at 819 - the beginning of our extract - although neither of them receives a mention until 842, when Trygaios begins to speak of his impending marriage to Theoria. The very presence of these girls on stage, to which further attention is drawn by the slave's question, would no doubt have roused certain expectations in a listener, since elsewhere in Aristophanes 'mute nude female characters' elicit lascivious

comments from male characters.[68] In the *Lysistrata*, for example, obscene comments about Diallagê are made both by the Athenian (e.g. 1136, ἐγὼ δ' ἀπόλλυμαί γ' ἀπεψωλημένος) and the Spartan (e.g. 1148, ὁ πρωκτὸς ἄφατον ὡς καλός). Similarly in the *Thesmophoriazousai*, the Scythian Archer comments on Elaphion's various physical attributes (e.g. 1185, 1187). In the present passage there is a gap of eight lines between the slave's question and the *double entendre* of 855 (λείχειν), where the awaited obscene comments about the girls occur. Interestingly, the diction of the intervening lines is remarkably restrained - they contain, for instance, neither primary obscenities nor elevated lexemes, with the one exception of the elevated βροτός (849).[69] To be sure, there is some slightly risqué humour at 848-50, but following this Aristophanes keeps his audience on tenterhooks. The listener expects that the girls will be the subject of some obscene comments - perhaps obscene humour - but does not know when and in what form it will come. As we shall see, in the interim Aristophanes tantalizes the expectant listener. The relative uniformity of register in these lines may even serve to focus the listener all the more on the potential of each word for obscene *double entendre*.

In response to the slave's question of 847 (πόθεν...;) Trygaios says, πόθεν; ἐκ τοὐρανου. The repetition of the interrogative πόθεν, where the relative ὁπόθεν would be more usual, is not unprecedented in our canon, although unusual.[70] Since all but one of our extant examples stem from Old Comedy, it is probably safest simply to assume that such repetition of the interrogative has its origins in colloquial speech. Thus, the single occurrence of this feature outside comedy, at Eur. *Ion* 959 (καὶ πῶς...ἔτλης; πῶς;), is best thought of as an example of a colloquialism (and perhaps an example of the Euripidean *penchant* for 'the repetition of a single word in an indignant or incredulous question'.)[71]

The establishment of the girls' origin as ἐκ τοὐρανοῦ in 847 provides an impetus for a humorous exchange. First, at 848-9, the slave juxtaposes mention

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[68]A phrase borrowed from Zweig 1992, who discusses the representation of these characters on stage. The presence of the girls could be said to establish a 'frame'.

[69]Discussed below.

[70]Other examples include Ar. *Av*. 1234; *Ec*. 761; *Nub*. 664; *Ran*. 1424 and Antiph. *fr*. 21 K.-A. See also Kühner-Gerth 1898, 2.2.517.

[71]Diggle 1981, 50.

of the gods with two areas of experience which are far from divine. He comments (848-9):

Οι. οὐκ ἂν ἔτι δοίην τῶν θεῶν τριώβολον,
εἰ πορνοβοσκοῦσ' ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς οἱ βροτοί.

The more subtle anomaly in these lines is that of 848. The slave says he would not give τριώβολον for the gods, a sum very much associated with Athens' lower classes, since three obols was the daily pay of dicasts and ἐπιβάται, the marine soldiery.[72] More blatant is the accusation in 849 that the gods keep brothels, πορνοβοσκοῦσ'.[73] It ought to be noted that the lexeme πορνοβοσκέω, 'to keep a brothel' (LSJ), is far from obscene, despite its referent - other occurrences include Dem. *In Nearam* 68.3 and Theophr. *Char.* 6.5.1. Also of interest is that this allegation appears in a section of verse whose rhythm is more-rather-than-less elevated. After the resolution of the first princeps in 848 (split in a less-rather-than-more tragic way into monosyllables), the slave's reply contains no further resolutions and both lines boast a penthemimeral caesura. Thus in 849 we have a playful collision between the low subject matter and the relatively heightened nature of the line's rhythm, the result of which, no doubt, is that the text is perceived by the listener as lying in a 'Playful' frame.

At 850, Trygaios responds to the slave's comments in a way which might be judged humorous by a listener:

Τρ. οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κἀκεῖ ζῶσιν ἀπὸ τούτων τινές.

The reply might be thought to be humorous by a listener on the grounds that Grice's maxim (2) 'say what you believe to be plausible' is violated. The initial οὐκ is immediately cast into doubt by the following ἀλλά..., the line being similar

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[72]LSJ, q. v. See also Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, who comments that τριώβολον is 'a proverbially small amount'. Similarly Rogers 1907 suggests on *Pl.* 125 that τριώβολον is 'a symbol of worthlessness'.

[73]The phrase ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς οἱ βροτοί, with its heavy alliteration in /h/ also occurs at *Eq.* 601. βροτός is 'poetic' (Dunbar 1995 on *Av.* 107; *pace* Neil 1901 on *Eq.* 601, who also believes the lexeme sometimes has a colloquial force). It occurs four times in prose: three times in Aristotle (*Top.* 133a31, twice, and 149a7) and once in Plato (*Rep.* 566d).

in structure to 829 above (οὔκ, εἰ μή γέ που...).[74] Moreover, with this reply Trygaios justifies the slave's fears about the gods' activities. Such confirmation of divine involvement in prostitution might also be considered humorous by the listener if he considers conventions to have been broken concerning the appropriate way in which to discuss the gods,[75] or in other words, if he considers the frame 'Gods' to have been abused.

Although lines 848-50 contain instances of mildly salacious humour, any expectations the listener has of obscenity are yet to be fulfilled. The subject of the gods is abandoned at 851 and the slave signals a change in the topic of conversation with the colloquial formula ἄγε νυν ἴωμεν.[76] He then asks Trygaios (850-1):

Οι. εἰπέ μοι, δῶ καταφαγεῖν
ταύτη τι;

The slave asks whether he should give Theôria anything to eat, καταφαγεῖν. Given that the listener's awareness of the possibility of *double entendres* is no doubt heightened during these lines owing to the presence of the girls, the use of the lexeme κατεσθίειν presents him with an interesting problem. As Silk argues in *Interaction in Poetic Imagery*, outside comedy, at least, κατεσθίειν is equivalent to the German *fressen*, 'normal of animals, pejorative of people'.[77] The verb is, however, found often in colloquial ('vulgar') speech simply as an equivalent to ἐσθίειν.[78] Given that κατεσθίειν may be used of animals, however, the listener might well guess that the employment of this word signals the prelude to an obscene comment. That is to say, because his awareness of ambiguity is heightened, he is particularly conscious that the potential of κατεσθίειν to signify 'to eat like an animal' (*fressen*) may be exploited. In fact, as we shall see,

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[74]On οὐκ ἀλλά, see Rogers 1913 on *Pax* 850 and 1916 on *Vesp.* 9.

[75]At Pl. *Rep.* 388b-92a, Socrates suggests ways in which Homer portrays the gods inappropriately. One complaint is that they are portrayed as subject to lust (390b). Cf. Longinos' censure of Homer for representing gods as like men, *On the Sublime* 9.7.

[76]López Eire, 1996, 27. The attribution of this phrase has been the subject of unnecessary dispute.

[77]As Silk adds (1974, 109): 'in comedy it is...frequent of people'.

[78]Ibid., 111 n.5. If Henderson is right (1991, 192) that *Ec.* 595 constitutes a proverb (κατέδει πέλεθου πρότερός μου) there can be no doubt about the standard colloquial use of καταφαγεῖν to signify *essen*.

κατεσθίειν plays no rôle in the construction of the obscene humour which eventually comes and is best considered as a decoy, a point of lesser interest (as it turns out) which serves to distract attention from the *double entendre* set up in the following lines.

Trygaios' reply to the servant's question contains a number of items of diction which may be tantalizing for the listener.

Τρ. μηδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἐθελήσει φαγεῖν
οὔτ' ἄρτον οὔτε μᾶζαν, εἰωθυῖ' ἀεὶ
παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖσιν ἀμβροσίαν λείχειν ἄνω.

φαγεῖν for example, is placed prominently at the end of 852, corresponding to (and indeed rhyming with) καταφαγεῖν in the previous line. A listener expecting a *double entendre* to arise from the use of καταφαγεῖν may well be puzzled on meeting this verb, which signifies *essen* only - are the potential differences in meaning to be exploited for obscene ends? In the next lines, the listener is confronted with the names of various foods. Since many slang terms for sexual organs derive from foodstuffs, the listener will no doubt also be suspicious that one of these words will play a rôle in a subsequent *double entendre*.[79] Neither ἄρτος nor μᾶζα is in itself a low item of diction (indeed both have a Hesiodic pedigree);[80] although to be sure the latter item does find use elsewhere in Aristophanes as a *double entendre* for 'cunt' (*Ach.* 835: μᾶδδαν) and 'cock' (*Eq.* 55), and at *Peace* 1-11 is the word used to connote the 'shit-cakes' fed to the dung-beetle. In the search for a word whose ambiguity will be utilized for sexual innuendo the listener might also suspect that ἀμβροσία will be exploited. Despite generally being found in elevated poetry, the lexeme has been used in the *Peace* by Aristophanes a mere hundred lines earlier to signify 'faeces' on which the beetle - ὁ τλήμων - will feed in heaven (723-4):

Τρ. πόθεν οὖν ὁ τλήμων ἐνθάδ' ἕξει σιτία;
Ερ. τὴν τοῦ Γανυμήδους ἀμβροσίαν σιτήσεται.

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[79]On food terms for genitalia, see Henderson 1991, 118-20 and 144.

[80]Hes. *Op.* 442, ἄρτον...τεσσαπακονταετής; 590, μάζα τ' ἀμολγαίη.

In fact, none of these words will provide the source of the eventual *double entendre*. However, the use of ἀμβροσία does (so to speak) act as a feed for the introduction of λείχειν. λείχειν is a lexeme often used of animals (e.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 827-8, λέων / ἄδην ἔλειξεν αἵματος), but also of humans when it is envisaged that either a salt-based foodstuff (e.g. Ar. *Eq.* 1089, λείχων ἐπίπαστα) or a liquid foodstuff is being consumed (e.g. Ar. *Vesp.* 738, χόνδρον λείχων - in the Hippokratic corpus, it is the standard term to denote the consumption of an electuary, e.g. *Morb.* 3.14). Since ἀμβροσία is not uncommonly spoken of as a liquid rather than a solid substance (Sapph. *fr.* 141; Pi. *P.* 9.63; cf. *Od.* 5.93), λείχειν here need not surprise the listener unduly.[81] Importantly, λείχειν is used elsewhere in Old Comedy to denote cunnilingus (e.g. *Eq.* 1285; cf. Ar. *fr.* 409, διαλείχοντα) and so the collocation ἀμβροσίαν λείχειν might reasonably be expected to render a reference to this activity.[82] In fact (like μᾶζα, which also has sexual overtones), ἀμβροσία acts as a decoy for the listener expecting an obscene comment. Instead it is the collocation of λείχειν with ἄνω which provides the necessary material for an Aristophanic *double entendre* par excellence. Aristophanes' use of the phrase παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖσιν at the beginning of 854 has allowed for the relatively inconspicuous introduction of ἄνω at the line's end, a word which is crucial for the realization of the humour, since it allows for the ambiguous λείχειν... κἀνθάδε in the following line. Presumably on the word ἐνθάδε the slave points at his phallus (855):[83]

λείχειν ἄρ' αὐτῇ κἀνθάδε σκευαστέον.

The humour of this line results from a violation of Grice's maxim (4b) 'avoid ambiguity'. Line 854 is an example of the phenomenon outlined in Chapter One, whereby text eventually interpreted as humorous is initially perceived as lying in the serious mode.

In 855 we observe an example of a significant phenomenon, as we shall see later: obscene humour is found in a line the rhythm of which is strictly tragic-

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[81]On this issue see Gerber 1982 on Pi. *O.* 1.62 and Olson 1998 on *Pax* 723-4. Perhaps the earlier proliferation of terms for eating (κατεσθίειν and ἐσθίειν) makes the appearance of λείχειν less surprising still.

[82]On λείχειν see Henderson 1991, 186.

[83]On the use of the verbal adjective σκευαστέον here, see Poultney 1963, 374.

compatible. Later in the passage there are numerous instances of obscene lexical features whose low tone is at odds with the metrical elevation of the line in which they are found. This feature of Aristophanic text will be discussed at greater length in the chapter's conclusion.

856-64

Χο. εὐδαιμονικῶς γ ' ὁ πρε–
σβύτης, ὅσα γ ' ὦδ ' ἰδεῖν,
τὰ νῦν τάδε πράττει.
Τρ. τί δῆτ ', ἐπειδὰν νυμφίον μ' ὁρᾶτε λαμπρὸν ὄντα;
Χο. ζηλωτὸς ἔσει, γέρον
αὖθις νέος ὢν πάλιν,
μύρῳ κατάλειπτος.
Τρ. οἶμαι. τί δῆθ', ὅταν ξυνὼν τῶν τιτθίων ἔχωμαι;
Χο. εὐδαιμονέστερος φανεῖ τῶν Καρκίνου στροβίλων.

In these lines, the topic of conversation switches back to Trygaios' impending wedding with Theôria. Lines 856-8 and 860-2 comprise a μακαρισμός of two mini-odes sung by the chorus on the subject of Trygaios' luck and new-found youthfulness. The three-verse odes consist of two telesilleans (x —UU—U—) resolved by a single reizianum (x —UU— —). These two Aeolic metres, related in form, are not at all uncommon in comedy, also appearing together at *Eq.* 1111ff., *Ran.* 448ff. and *Ec.* 289ff.[84] The use of telesilleans in a marital context is paralleled elsewhere in Aristophanes: this is the metre used in the wedding hymns which end both the *Birds* (1731ff.) and the *Peace* (1329ff.), in the latter instance occurring in combination with reiziana. The question as to whether the use of telesilleans in a nuptial context was traditional must remain unresolved, however. Their only other extant appearance in such a setting is in Sappho *fr.* 141, although it has been suggested that Telesilla's lost *Marriage of Zeus and Hera* was composed in this metre.[85] Both choral sequences are followed by a line of iambic tetrameter catalectic delivered by Trygaios. At 864, after the second such exchange, the

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[84]On Aristophanes' use of reiziana as clausulae for telesilleans, see Zimmermann 1987, index, s.v. reizianum.

[85]See Parker 1997, 292-3. Tantalizingly, the ὑμέναιος at *Birds* 1731ff. concerns this very marriage.

chorus respond to Trygaios with a further line of iambic tetrameter catalectic, which break of rhythm is followed by Trygaios' ode of 865-867.[86] Whilst humour is not prevalent in these lines, it will be noted nonetheless that this extract displays the rich textual variety of which Aristophanes' verse is capable. The mixture of unusual and standard, of neutral, colloquial and elevated lexical items adds a vitality and 'playfulness' to the odes. Let us see how this effect is realized.

At 856, at the beginning of the first mini-ode, the listener is confronted with the unusual εὐδαιμονικῶς, a lexeme attested only twice in Greek literature: here and at Xen. *Hell*. 3.2.9. What is more, this adverb is formed from an unusual adjective; εὐδαίμων being far more common than εὐδαιμονικός, the spread of the latter being limited to Aristophanes and fourth-century philosophy.[87] From this data the lexemic complex εὐδαιμονικός/ εὐδαιμονικῶς is to be considered, then, either: (i) an Aristophanic innovation which prefigures later usage in philosophy; (ii) as having its origin in a lost common source; or (iii) representative of lexemes already in use in the fifth century, most likely restricted to philosophical circles. Whilst the latter explanation is surely the more probable - a comedian borrowing a philosopher's coinage is common-or-garden, whilst the opposite would no doubt be exceptional -[88] it should be borne in mind that -ικός adjectives *are* coined and mocked by Aristophanes elsewhere.[89] Even if we assume that εὐδαιμονικός did already exist as an adjective, however, Aristophanes may still have been innovative here in employing an adverbial form. The presence of this unusual lexical item (especially in such a prominent position) may serve to heighten the listener's awareness of the text and may even be considered 'playful'.

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[86]This exchange is structurally similar to *Ach*. 1037ff., which Parker ibid., 11, dubs an 'accidental duet', commenting further, ibid.: 'this is not paratragedy, but the technique has affinities with dialogues in tragedy between a highly emotional and a calmer character, where the first uses lyric metre and the second spoken metre.'

[87]Ar. *Ec*. 1134; Arist. *EN* 10,6.3, Pl. *Phaedr*. 253c4, Xen. *Mem*. 4.2.34. Interestingly, the fourth-century philosopher Anaxarkhos is described as, Ἀ. ὁ Εὐδαιμονικός, Anaxarch. *fr*. 1 D.-K.

[88]See Chapter 4, p.121 and n.72. See also Silk 1974, 40-1, who grapples with a similar problem, albeit concerned with establishing a phrase as dead metaphor.

[89]Such as in the much-cited passage *Eq*., 1375ff. See Dover 1987, 238; 1987, 229 and n.11, and 1997, 118f. Peppler 1910, 441, posits that -ικός adjectives had a 'learned sound' and 'belonged originally to the high sphere of scientific thought and philosophical inquiry'.

τὰ νῦν τάδε poses a unique set of problems. First, whilst one is tempted to take it as a whole phrase, the possibility must be admitted that τάδε could be acting as a quite separate accusative of respect. Scholia on this passage only comment on the phrase τὰ νῦν – which they fix as being strictly Attic - and so fail to resolve this potential ambiguity.[90] In support of τὰ νῦν τάδε being a phrase in itself, however, the canon boasts four parallels outside this passage:[91] three in Euripides (*Heracl.* 641, *HF* 246, *Iph. Aul.* 537) and one in Herodotos (7.104.5). What are we to make of this spread? In Herodotos, the phrase occurs in the middle of a speech by the exiled Spartan King, Damartos - a monologue which shows no other distinctive dialect features (certainly it is written in neither Attic nor Laconian). In the light of the rest of its spread, its presence in a passage of *speech* in Herodotos suggests that τὰ νῦν τάδε be classed as 'colloquial', and whilst the scholiasts' comments on τὰ νῦν increase the probability of this being an Attic expression adopted by the historian, the issue must remain open. Its classification as colloquial also removes the possibility of the phrase being classed as 'unusual', since the paucity of its occurrences are to be attributed to its belonging to the spoken rather than written language. Nevertheless, the chronological closeness of the occurrences of τὰ νῦν τάδε would appear to suggest that this was a colloquialism with a short life, being in vogue only during the late fifth-century.

The construction ὅσα plus infinitive, occurring at 857 meaning 'as far as to...', 'as far as one can...' is, like εὐδαιμονικῶς, an example of unusual language. Whilst the construction is fairly common with the singular ὅσον, ὅσα *plus* infinitive is paralleled only a handful of times in pre-Hellenistic literature (Thuc. 6.25 ὅσα...ἤδη δοκεῖν αὐτῷ; Soph. *OC* 152 ὅσ' ἐπεικάσαι,[92] and a possible ¶

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[90]Schweighaeuser 1840, s.v. νῦν lists τὰ νῦν τάδε as a phrase in itself, commenting *majori cum emphasi.* The fact that as thorough a lexicographer as Powell, J. E. 1938 fails to assign any separate meaning to τάδε (q. v.) may suggest that he too takes τὰ νῦν τάδε to be a complete phrase.

[91]All in the present form: the oblique cases are unknown. Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, cites only the Euripidean parallels and merely comments that the phrase is 'an emphatic νῦν. Idiomatic.'

[92]Jebb and the OCT offer the reading given here.

instance at Thuc. 8.46 ὅσα γε ἀπὸ τῶν ποιουμένων (ἦν) εἰκάσαι).[93] Platnauer points out that the use of ὧδε in this line is 'strange' - its sense is indeed unclear - and that its presence here has led to the text being impugned.[94] Again, the presence of unusual features may serve to heighten the listener's awareness of the text.

In short, the first ode (856-8) is made up of neutral language with the addition of a handful of less-rather-than-more-elevated lexemes and unusual features. Examples of non-elevated lexemes include the neutral πρεσβύτης, which is chosen over the more poetic πρέσβυς, and the colloquial τὰ νῦν τάδε, employed despite the Aeolic metre. The unusual features in the ode include the adverb εὐδαιμονικῶς and the construction ὅσα plus infinitive. The juxtaposition of unusual and colloquial features in this ode serves subtly to pull the listener in different directions. The presence of unusual features in a text is not incompatible with elevation, but any pretence to grandeur in this ode is certainly undercut by the colloquial features therein. What is more, this mixture of features is itself unusual and may even impinge as unsettling or more likely, I would suggest, as playful.

The features of the second mini-ode are more tonally consistent than those of the first. The expression is generally elevated and the listener must wait until the final line for a less-rather-than-more-elevated item, μύρον, used to very subtle effect. Let us look at Aristophanes' use of language in this ode, focusing on the pleonastic phrase αὖθις...πάλιν, the ode's quasi-proverbial tone and its elevated expression.

Whilst the lexemes πάλιν and αὖθις often appear in the same clause in pre-Hellenistic Greek, the phrase is less often used pleonastically: more usually, πάλιν has a 'local' sense, such as at *Peace* 845, καὶ ταῦτα δράσας ἦκε δεῦρ' αὖθις πάλιν, where the phrase is best translated 'back again'. The phrase is first found in Homer, where the two words always appear consecutively and in the same

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[93]Only Krüger 1860, *ad loc.*, omits ἦν. See Dover 1973, 10, on Thoukydides' tendency for '"stretching" the resources of Greek syntax and experimenting with it,' in ways of which 'the closest analogies are to be found in poetry.' Perhaps this construction would have had a quasi-poetic feel.

[94]Platnauer 1964, *ad loc.*

order as πάλιν αὖτις. Amongst Homer's six uses of the phrase, two are certainly pleonastic (that is, πάλιν lacks a 'local' force): *Il.* 2.276 and 17.533.[95]

After Homer, the phrase is used more freely: either word can appear as the first word of the phrase and the words are often separated by others, as in the present example. The phrase is used in a number of authors, but as a pleonasm its spread is limited to five: Sophokles (three times: *Phil.* 342; *OC* 364; *fr.* 487.3 Radt); Euripides (once in iambics, *Hel.* 262 - once in lyric, *Heracl.* 708); Aristophanes (four times); Pherekrates (once), and Plato (at least three times: *Phil.* 34b11; *Pol.* 282c5; *Soph.* 34b11).[96] Outside Homer, Plato, and the Attic tragedians there are, then, five occurrences of the phrase in our canon. It appears once in Pherekrates (πάλιν αὖθις: in iambics, context unknown: *fr.* 185 K.-A.), and four times in Aristophanes: twice in lyric (*Ran.* 595-6 πάλιν...αὖθις and *Pax* 861); once in a rather formal speech of Just Argument's in the *Clouds* (πάλιν αὖθις, *Nub.* 975) and once in a paratragic exchange in the *Wealth* (πάλιν αὖθις, *Pl.* 859). In short, the phrase is elevated, Aristophanes' use of it here is paratragic and its use by Plato is merely symptomatic of the latter's tendency to employ a mixture of registers in his prose.[97]

The subject of the ode, the rejuvenation of an old man, evokes two *topoi* of contemporary Greek thought: (i), no doubt ironically, the idea that on growing old a man metaphorically becomes a child again, as found in the proverb δὶς παῖδες οἱ γέροντες (Diogen. 4.18 = Ar. *Nub.* 1417; cf. Cratin. *fr.* 24 (1.20 K) which confirms that this sentiment is proverbial; ἦν ἆρ' ἀληθὴς ὁ λόγος ὡς δὶς παῖς γέρων); and (ii) that it is in fact impossible for an old man to regain his lost youth

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[95]See Leaf 1886 on *Il.* 2.276 *contra* Schol. A. Aristarkhos' claims that Homer always uses πάλιν with a local force.

[96]It would appear that Plato uses the phrase to mean different things. At *Pol.* 282c, for example, the translation 'again' is perfectly sufficient. Elsewhere, whilst πάλιν is certainly used without a local force, the phrase in Plato's hands seems to take on a new life. At *Tim.* 32a, for example, its translation as 'vice versa' would appear appropriate, and at *Euth.* 291d something like 'later on'.

[97]This conclusion is strengthened by the data provided by Renehan's brief survey of the redundant use of πάλιν (1976, 48ff.), the list of provenances of which comprises only tragedians, 'high' lyric poetry and Aristophanes. It is interesting to note that when in comedy the phrase is used in iambics rather than lyric, the Homeric formula πάλιν αὖθις is always adhered to, whereas in song this is not always the case. Presumably a poeticism when used in speech requires to be stressed as such.

(e.g. Theogn. 1009-10 οὐ γὰρ ἀνηβᾶν / δὶς πέλεται πρὸς θεῶν; Bacch. 3.88-90 ἀνδρὶ δ' οὐ θέμις...αὖτις ἀγκομίσαι ἥβαν).[98] Interestingly, expressions falling into both these categories often contain some form of pleonasm. The Theognis and Bakkhylides extracts just quoted exemplify this well: both contain the prefix ἀνα- to signify 'again', to which Theognis adds a pleonastic δίς and Bakkhylides a pleonastic αὖτις. Soph. *fr.* 487.3 even combines sentiment (i) with the very pleonasm found at *Peace* 861, αὖθις...πάλιν:

πάλιν γὰρ αὖθις παῖς ὁ γηράσκων ἀνήρ,[99]

with which compare Eur. *Heracl.* 707-8, where πάλιν αὖθις appears in the context of a sentiment falling into category (ii):

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως
ἥβην κτήσῃ πάλιν αὖθις.

In sentiments falling into category (i), γερών is the usual word for 'old man' (Sophokles is therefore *un*conventional - ὁ γηράσκων ἀνήρ - and Aristophanes not). Nor is the use of νεός unparalleled in the context of rejuvenation, as can be seen from Eur. *Heracl.* 796, a line which contains language strikingly similar to that of the present passage.

νεός μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέροντος αὖθις αὖ.

The ode of 860-2, short though it is, demonstrates well the principle outlined by Silk in 'Aristophanes as a Lyric Poet', whereby in his high-style odes our poet regularly employs traditional sentiments expressed in conventional vocabulary.[100] The pastiche he achieves is playful and careful (right down to the poetic substitution of ὤν for γενομένος) - but hardly innovative.

The conventional and elevated nature of the first two lines of the ode provides a backdrop to the subtle surprises of the last line, 862. The last word of the second mini-ode, κατάλειπτος, a word presumably coined by Aristophanes,

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[98]For fuller comments on this *topos*, see Pearson 1917 on Soph. *fr.* 487.3 Radt.

[99]And cf. *Ran.* 590ff., another ode about rejuvenation, where αὖθις...πάλιν also appears (595-6).

[100]See his comments on various 'serious' Aristophanic odes: Silk 1980, 100-117.

certainly qualifies as 'unusual', since it occurs only twice in extant Greek literature: here and at *Eq.* 1333 (this said, its unusualness does not render it any less conventional: it is *conventionally* highfalutin). The similarities and differences between this passage and that of the *Knights* in which the word makes its first appearance are noteworthy. In the *Knights* passage, the Sausage-Seller offers a description of the newly rejuvenated Demos, the high-flown language of which is comparable to flamboyantly elevated poetry such as a dithyramb or an Aiskhylean choral ode. The resemblance is that the Sausage-Seller, like Trygaios, is described both by the neutral lexeme λαμπρός (1332; cf. *Pax* 859)[101] and as σμύρνῃ κατάλειπτος (1333) - σμύρνη being a synonym of μύρον, albeit one possessing a more Ionic flavour.[102] This echo of a previous play, were it to be noticed by the listener, could serve to draw his attention to the restrained nature of the elevated language of the present ode compared with that of *Knights* 1332-3, this difference being highlighted by the replacement of σμύρνη by the slightly more down-to-earth (that is, more Attic) μύρον. The listener, then, is playfully pulled in two directions by this collocation: on the one hand he is presented with an ornate lexeme, κατάλειπτος; on the other hand, the lexeme μύρον and the resonances the whole phrase evokes serve to remind him of just how restrained the elevation of this ode has been. In terms of our model of humour, Aristophanes has slyly broken a frame whilst simultaneously demonstrating his capability of maintaining it.

How do the various lexemic features of these odes affect the classification of the text in hand? Whilst, the introduction of unusual language might on occasion be thought to violate Grice's maxim 4 (a), 'avoid obscurity of expression', in the present passage the maxim is probably better thought of as stretched rather than violated by the unusual items encountered. I would argue once more, though, that the subtle juxtaposition of items of different registers and different degrees of unusualness serves to unsettle the listener and/or heighten his awareness of the text in hand. Indeed, in all probability the passage impinges as somewhat exuberant and the text would be regarded by the listener as nested in a 'Playful' frame.

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[101]See Silk 1974, 199 n.26, who declares λαμπρός 'to be specially associated with the good looks of youthful or prenuptial complexion'.

[102]Whilst Aristotle, Theophrastos and the Hippokratics all use both words, the general trend is for Attic authors to favour μύρον and Ionic authors σμύρνη.

At 863, Trygaios speaks a line of iambic tetrameter catalectic. This line mirrors 859, where the chorus' mini-ode is also followed by a question, asked in the same metre and introduced by τί δῆτα.[103] Rather than reply with a further ode, however, Trygaios' iambic metre is this time playfully echoed by the chorus at 864.

Τρ. οἶμαι. τί δῆθ', ὅταν ξυνὼν τῶν τιτθίων ἔχωμαι;
Χο. εὐδαιμονέστερος φανεῖ τῶν Καρκίνου στροβίλων.

As we have seen, the ode just sung is elevated in both diction and sentiment. The two lines of recitative, 863-4, might be said to be lower in tone, since they contain humour and mentions of the sexual act, although obscenity is certainly avoided. Correct understanding of the register of the lexeme τιτθίον is central to appreciating how this tone is established. The lexemic complex τιτθός, τιτθίον and τιτθίδιον are for obvious reasons often rendered by the English 'tit' or 'titty':[104] translations which do not quite do justice to the phenomenon at hand, since these English lexemes have a slightly obscene (naughty?) resonance.[105] Whilst the diminutive forms τιτθίον and τιτθίδιον occur only in comedy (and so at first glance appear to be candidates for categorization as 'obscene'), τιτθός appears not just in comedy but also once in a fragment of the fourth-century astronomer Eudoxos,[106] twice in Lysias and frequently in the Hippokratic corpus denoting *mamma mulieris*.[107] Its distribution suggests, then,

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[103]On the use of which phrase in the context of *makarismoi*, see Zimmermann 1984, 183.

[104]For the latter translation, see Sommerstein 1985, *ad loc.*

[105]Collins- Robert, *French-English Dictionary*[2] (London, 1987), for example, gives 'tit' a three-star rating which indicates its membership of a group of words which 'are liable to offend in any situation, and therefore are to be avoided by the non-native speaker'.

[106]*Fr.* 283.3, where he describes the custom of a tribe called the Khabarnoi of eating the breasts of foreign women raw.

[107]See Kühn-Fleischer 1986, s.v. τιτθός. The other occurrences are at Ar. *Lys*. 83, *Thesm.* 640; Eudox. *fr.* 283.3 and Lys. *Erat.* 10.3, 12.3: indeed, the paucity of its occurrences in Attic authors may even suggest that the lexeme is to be perceived as slightly unusual. Whilst τιτθός is used far less frequently than the ubiquitous μαστός, τιτθίον is an extremely common colloquialism in Old and New Comedy alike.

that the lexeme τιτθός (in Attic at least)[108] is to be rated as 'neutral' or 'neutral-cum-colloquial' - not quite a 'tit', more like a 'bosom' - and that its diminutive forms are best considered as 'colloquial'. That is to say, in line 863 we are looking at something resembling more a pair of 'boobs' than 'titties'.[109]

Aristophanes' avoidance of obscenity in this line is also well exemplified by his use of the neutral σύνειμι to mean to 'have sexual relations' (LSJ, s.v. 2). This lexeme impinges as particularly restrained in comparison with the obscene *double entendre* of 856 (λείχειν). The listener may find such restraint slightly puzzling and/or 'playful'.

863 is given a degree of prominence within the passage by the presence of assonance in the repeated /t/ phonemes. The accumulation of /ô/ and /n/ sounds also creates a faint jingle in this line, although since ω and ν are repeated here in verb- and case-endings rather than in word stems, the sound effects their repetition create must be regarded as of limited importance.[110] Not only does Aristophanes' use of lexical items display vitality and variation, but so too does his use of sound patterns.

The chorus' utterance of 864 contains two instances of humour παρὰ προσδοκίαν.

εὐδαιμονέστερος φανεῖ τῶν Καρκίνου στροβίλων.

First, the beginning of the line creates the frame 'Proverb'. However, the line's anecdotal ending serves to break this frame. Second, at the end of the line we encounter the unusual and unexpected word στροβίλων.

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[108]Its use by the Hippokratics means that the lexeme qualifies as a 'neutral' term in Ionic. The fact that Lysias is the only Athenian besides the comic poets to use τιτθός perhaps suggests, however, that it had a somewhat colloquial tone in Attic, although it was in no way obscene.

[109]Olson 1998, *ad loc.*, plausibly suggests that the 'dimin. often has erotic connotations...as τιτθός...does not.' See also Amundsen 1965 for a brief survey of the ways in which diminutives may be affective.

[110]For examples of similar clusters (e.g. of -ων endings) occurring in prose, see Denniston 1952, 125, whose citation of Dem. 18.238 is apposite here: τῶν ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐκείνων ἀγωνισαμένων τριήρων, τριακοσίων οὐσῶν τῶν πασῶν.

This line is carefully crafted to throw prominence on this last word. The first three words of the line resemble a saying or a similarly proverbial piece of advice of the kind a tragic chorus is wont to give.[111] Even the penultimate word καρκίνου does not in itself dash the listener's expectations, since animals in general and even crabs in particular feature often enough in proverbs.[112] What it does do, however, is allow an ambiguity to arise:[113] is Aristophanes in fact referring to a crab or alternatively to the playwright Karkinos, fresh in the audience's mind since he has been mocked at length not only in the *Wasps* (1500ff.), but also a mere hundred lines earlier in the *Peace* (782ff.)? When Karkinos is mocked by Aristophanes, his sons, who were evidently talented dancers, are always mocked as well: at the end of the *Wasps,* for example, they appear on stage as dancing crabs. In consequence, the listener might reasonably expect either a suitably proverbial ending to this line or a reference to Karkinos' sons. What he is in fact presented with at the end of the line is στροβίλων, which requires the listener to think fast if he is to endow the line with any meaning. For στροβίλος, LSJ gives the meanings 'round ball', 'spinning top', 'cyclone, whirlwind', and 'twist or turn in music', but chooses to render the present occurrence 'whirling dance, pirouette', a meaning which is corroborated by no other pre-Hellenistic instance of this word's occurrence, but nevertheless one which is clearly assumed by both Athenaios and Pollux in their respective discussions of types of dance.[114] Two explanations are possible. First, a lexeme στροβίλος = 'whirling dance' (which could be classed as 'technical'?) existed in the classical period and *Peace* 864 is its only extant occurrence. Second, the latter

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[111]See Dover 1972, 184, who calls such pieces of wisdom 'banalities'. See also Silk 1980, 104.

[112]Proverbs about crabs include PMG 892 (= Athen. 15.695a) and Plut. *de Herod.* 27.862f (= Strömberg 1954, 107: *Dubia* 8). Ar. *Pax* 1083 might be another cancroid proverb: οὔποτε ποιήσεις τὸν καρκίνον ὀρθὰ βαδίζειν. For other animal proverbs, see PMG 903 (σκορπίος), PMG 904 (ὗς) and Strömberg 1954, passim.

[113]The ambiguity of the word Καρκίνος/καρκίνος is demonstrated well by the scholiasts' comments on this passage, some of which concern Karkinos the playwright, some the similarity between clay spinning tops (στροβίλοι) and the shells of crabs. Taillardat 1965, 462-5, even takes στροβίλος here to signify a crab's shell.

[114]Athen. 14.630a; Pollux 6.129. There is debate over the meaning of the word as occurring in a fragment of Pherekrates' lost *Khiron*, however (*fr.* 161.14 K.-A.). Borthwick 1968, 67-8, argues that Pherekrates does indeed envisage στροβίλος as a kind of dance, but this is in no way the c*ommunis opinio*. For discussion of this problem, see Dobrov and Urios-Aparisi 1995, 151 and 155-6.

lexeme owes its existence in post-classical times to a misunderstanding of the present passage. If the second explanation is right, then Aristophanes has used the word here as a metaphor: στροβίλων comes as a surprise to the listener, appearing in place of the half-expected παίδων and, through the range of meanings it possesses, conjures up an image of these children of Karkinos as dancing an energetic, whirling dance.

Aside from the humorous break in the frame 'Proverb', this line might also be judged humorous on the grounds that several of Grice's maxims are violated, most notably (1) 'be relevant', (3a) 'make your contribution as informative as is required', (4a) 'avoid obscurity of expression'. Interestingly, the semantic humour coincides with potential metrical humour: when interrupted by Trygaios' iambic tetrameter catalectic at 859, the chorus resumed their Aeolic metres; this time a similar interruption is followed by their playfully aping Trygaios' metre: thus a frame might be thought to have been broken.

865-7

Τρ. οὔκουν δικαίως; ὅστις εἶς
ὄχημα κανθάρου 'πιβὰς
ἔσωσα τοὺς Ἕλληνας, ὥστ '
ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς
ἅπαντας ὄντας ἀσφαλῶς
κινεῖν τε καὶ καθεύδειν.

At 865-7 Trygaios sings a short ode, a 'lyrischen pnigos', composed in iambic metres.[115] The text we have comprises an iambic tetrameter (865); an iambic trimeter (866), and an iambic tetrameter catalectic (867). There is every reason to suspect, however, that 866 was originally an iambic tetrameter catalectic for the following reasons: 856-67 corresponds metrically to 909-21 in every respect save this penultimate line, and the text of its sister line, 920, would appear sound.[116]

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[115]Zimmermann 1984, 179.

[116]Although, to be sure, various emendations have been suggested, on which see Parker 1997, 282-3. Triclinius emends 866 with ἀγροῖσ<ιν αὐτούς> (followed by Olson 1998); Dindorff excises ὅμιλον in 920, an excision to which Parker objects, 283.

In this mini-ode, Trygaios gives himself unfettered praise for his actions in delivering peace to all the Greeks. The ode is an intriguing mix of paratragedy (including parody) and everyday lexical items, culminating in the obscene item, κινεῖν (or βινεῖν) in its penultimate metron. The ode contains instances of frame abuse and also 'collisions' and, as we shall see, its tone fluctuates constantly and often tantalizingly.

The paratragic elements of this ode have been the subject of much comment.[117] Nenci, for example, who proposes the emendation εἷς (for the manuscripts' εἰς), highlights the tradition of the tragic and epic opposition 'del solo...ai molti', citing parallels such as Aesch. *Sept*. 6 Ἐτεοκλέης ἂν εἷς πολὺς κατὰ πτόλιν ὑμνοῖθ' and Soph. *OT* 1379-80 ἐγὼ / κάλλιστ' ἀνὴρ εἷς ἐν γε ταῖς Θήβαις τραφείς.[118] He also draws a comparison between this passage and Hdt. 7.139 where Athens is described as the σωτὴρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος.[119] Interestingly, the phrase ὅστις...εἷς also appears in an Aristophanic passage of strong tragic flavour composed in iambo-dochmiacs, *Ach*. 491ff.: ἀνήρ / ὅστις παρασχὼν τῇ πόλει τὸν αὐχένα / ἅπασι μέλλεις εἷς λέγειν τἀναντία (491-3) (cf. also *Eq*. 861 ὅστις εἷς ὢν; *Pl*. 948 εἷς ὢν μόνος).

The construction ὄχημα plus genitive occurring in 865 certainly has a strong tragic flavour. Platnauer provides two comparable instances from tragedy, Aesch. *PV* 468 ναυτίλων ὀχήματα and Soph. *Tr*. 656 ὄχημα ναός, alongside which might be cited Eur. *Supp*. 662 ἁρμάτων δ' ὀχήματα (cf. Eur. *Alc*. 66-7 ἵππειον μετὰ/ ὄχημα; *Rh*. 621 ὄχημα...πωλικόν).[120] However, the juxtaposition of ὄχημα alongside the everyday κανθάρου serves to break the tragic spell. Here, then, we have an example of a collision, a 'playful' juxtaposition of the tragic and the everyday which is, it will be noted, characteristic of this ode. That is, taken as a whole, the song comprises tragic phraseology and sentiment found alongside everyday and even obscene diction and subject matter.

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[117]See Platnauer 1964 on this passage, *ad loc*., and more especially Nenci 1979.

[118]Nenci 1979, 84 and n.13. *Pace* Olson 1998 on *Pax* 865.

[119]Nenci 1979, 84.

[120]On –μα nouns in general, see Peppler 1916 and Long 1968, 35-46, who comments (37) that, '-ma nouns tend to make the style more weighty'. La Penna 1976, 229, has compared the phrase ὄχημα κανθάρου with the conjectured ὀχήματι κριῶν in a fragment of Hekataios (328a Jacoby = 343 Nenci).

865 also sees the use of ἐπιβαίνω 'to mount' which, as Nenci comments, is 'sempre usato con l'accusativo o senza preposizione o, di preferenza, con la ripetizione di ἐπί.'[121] In fact the omission of ἐπί is restricted to high register poetry, with parallel usages to be found at *ps.*-Hes. *Sc.* 286 νῶθ' ἵππων ἐπιβάντες and Eur. *Hipp.* 1131 συζυγίαν...ἐπιβάση.[122] The prodelision of the ε– of ἐπί ('πιβὰς) occurs infrequently compared, say, to the elision of the augment and is a feature restricted to drama and lyric poetry.[123] An assessment of the tone of this feature is near impossible, however. To be sure, other Aristophanic instances include *Lys.* 110 and *Ec.* 1148, both of which passages are less-rather-than-more elevated in tone, but it is unclear in these instances whether the prodelision would impinge as an ordinary feature of dramatic dialogue or as a source of collision with the surrounding text.

Trygaios' song contains some remarkable sound effects adding to the rich variety of Aristophanes' verse. Certain phonemes are repeated in prominent positions such as the initial /h/ and final /s/ of ὅστις εἶς (cf. Ἕλληνας, ὥστ') and the repetition of the initial /k/ in κινεῖν ...καὶ καθεύδειν. In addition, we have the repeated /a/ and /nt/ in ἅπαντας ὄντας ἀσφαλῶς. In this latter phrase, as throughout the ode, the phoneme which is most prominent is /s/: indeed, sigma occurs no fewer than fifteen times in the song. The presence of such abundant sigmatism is of particular interest since, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the phoneme /s/ was regarded by many ancient commentators as inappropriate to tonally high literature.[124] Of special relevance to the present passage is that Euripides was mocked for his excessive sigmatism, as in the following quip of Plato Comicus (*fr.* 29 K.-A.):[125]

ἔσωσα σ' ἐκ τῶν σῖγμα τῶν Εὐρίπιδου.

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[121]Nenci 1979, 81.

[122]On the latter see Barrett 1964, *ad loc.*, who specifically discusses this use of ἐπιβαίνω plus accusative.

[123]Instances occur at Aesch. *Ch.* 161 Eur. *Supp.* 521; 708; *Cyc.* 155; Anacr. *fr.* 23 Bergk.

[124]On the ancient disapproval of sigmatism, see Chapter 4, n.110.

[125]Scott 1908 suggests that Euripides was no more sigmatic than the other tragedians, whereas Todd 1942, 33-9, argues that he was not *perceptibly* so. It must be said, however, that neither differentiates between sigmas occurring in word-stems and those occurring in word endings.

This line is itself evidently a parody of *Medea* 476-7:

> ἔσωσα σ', ὡς ἴσασιν Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι
> ταὐτὸν συνεισέβησαν Ἀργῷον σκάφος.

Like Plato Comicus, Aristophanes seems to have had just these Euripidean lines in mind when composing *Peace* 865-6.[126] The elements ἔσωσα, Ἑλλήν–, a compounded form of βαίνω in the aorist, plus direct object, repetition of initial /h/, a faint jingle in /n/ and strong sigmatism are common to both passages.[127]

Thus there is in this ode a swift movement from appropriation of tragic phraseology in general to the parody of a specific Euripidean phrase. The diction of 865 helps establish the song's paratragic credentials with the tragic phrase ὄχημα plus genitive accompanied by ὁστις εἶς and ἐπιβαίνω plus accusative (without preposition). The line can hardly be described as tragic pastiche or even 'elevated', however, since it sees the collision of these heightened lexical features with the unelevated item κανθάρου. 866 is also paratragic and similarly cannot be described as 'elevated' since it is both parodic and heavily sigmatic - in both lines no sooner is a tragic co-presence evoked than it is undercut. After toying with paratragic diction, Aristophanes ends the ode in a tonally low way. 867 not only contains heavy alliteration (in /ă/, /s/ and /k/), but also the obscene κινεῖν (maybe βινεῖν), the effect of which is to dash any pretension to elevation.[128] In terms of the model of humour perception, first a 'Tragic', then a specifically 'Euripidean' frame is evoked, then abused. Finally, the descent in tone is made complete by the use of obscenity.

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[126] *Pace* Olson 1998, *ad loc.*

[127] Indeed, imitation of the Euripidean passage might help account for the use of the accusative after ἐπιβαίνω.

[128] It might be noted that this ode constitutes an example (although no doubt atypical) of Silk's 'low lyric *plus*' in which 'the lyrics start high, then dip low, and usually end low' (1980, 133). He adds, 134, 'there is usually a certain mischievous comic logic behind the pattern, a conjuring trick with δόξα and ἐπιστήμη: you purport to stake a claim to high lyrical status, only to subvert your own pretension at the next stroke'. The accumulation of tragic (or mock-tragic) features is typical of Silk's 'deconstructive' parody (1993, 492).

Let us briefly look at κινεῖν in more detail. Although both Olson and Platnauer propose βινεῖν in 867, I have chosen to follow Bain in keeping the reading κινεῖν. As Bain notes, whilst in many cases the manuscripts offer a choice between κιν- and βιν- readings (a confusion which he discusses at length), for *Peace* 867 the manuscripts offer no variant βιν- form.[129] What is more, the κιν- reading is the more tempting owing to the resulting alliteration κινεῖν...καὶ καθεύδειν (an echo, incidentally, of *Pax* 341, πλεῖν, μένειν, κινεῖν, καθεύδειν). As for the tone of κινεῖν, I am in agreement with Bain who argues, 'there must be *some* difference between an outright vulgar word which has virtually no secondary connotations...and a word which is extremely common in contexts without a sexual reference and which is used because it suggests the other word.'[130] To judge from English examples like 'firkin', such words do not impinge as primary obscenities but something altogether more muted.[131]

An interesting note on the position of κινεῖν in 867. The listener cannot know until the end of the line whether κινεῖν is being used intransitively (and thus in an obscene way) or transitively (and thus not).[132] Indeed, it is not until he hears καθεύδειν - a verb itself which Aristophanes often uses with a sexual force -[133] that the listener can ascertain the force of κινεῖν with certainty.[134] Thus Aristophanes once more pulls his listener in two directions. On the one hand he has employed an obscene lexeme, but on the other, this obscenity is somewhat muted and the listener has even had to delay judgement as to whether or not the item is obscene until the song has finished.

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[129]See Bain 1991, 63-7, esp. 64.

[130]Ibid., 64.

[131]Indeed, that some tasteless individuals have seen fit to bring a 'firkin' drinking establishment to every high street has raised few eyebrows. All this is in strong contrast to the police warnings in the summer of 1990 to the wearers of the 'fucking cool' t-shirts produced by the band *The Inspiral Carpets*. Substitute expletives like 'sugar' (for 'shit') or 'fudge' (for 'fuck') also belong to this category of words.

[132]As Bain states 1991, 65, 'to "move (oneself)" in classical Greek is expressed by κινεῖσθαι, not κινεῖν.'

[133]Such as at *Ach.* 1220; *Ec.* 700, 894, 938, 1039, 1051.

[134]On the use of κινεῖν at *Pax* 867, Olson 1998 adds that, 'Σ^{V} detects a pun on πίνειν'.

Conclusions

The analysis of these 49 lines of the *Peace* (819-57) has inevitably thrown up a number of points which merit further discussion and I shall now take the opportunity to reflect on what conclusions it may help us draw about Aristophanic text. One purpose of the present chapter has been to demonstrate the model of humour perception in use in relation to a continuous piece of Aristophanic verse. We have seen in the course of the analysis how the model is able to account for the potential of given pieces of text to be categorized as humorous by a listener. However, it has not been the only aim of this chapter to look at instances of humour at the macro-level of the text - this has been dealt with in Chapter Two. Rather, the primary focus has been on the micro-level of the text. One project of these conclusions will be to discuss briefly the effects on the listener of the text's constantly changing tone and register in terms of the modular theory of text classification articulated in Chapter One. In particular, I shall comment further on the way in which Aristophanes so often frames his text in a 'playful' fashion.

The analysis of the micro-level of Aristophanic text in this chapter has allowed the efficacy of the model of humour perception to be demonstrated in a rigorous fashion. It has been an implicit assumption of this project that a general theory of humour perception can best be tested when all the possible factors affecting the listener's classification of the text are taken into account. Moreover, certain characteristics of Aristophanes' style, demonstrable at the micro-level, are not always apparent or even predictable when only the macro-level of the text is considered. Among such characteristics are the playful use of diction and metre and the interrelation between the two. We shall discuss these phenomena below and shall also consider the use of obscenity in the passage.

In these closing remarks I shall also be concerned once more with the nature and rôle of the collisions which appear in the text and their effect on the listener. In framing my comments I shall look ahead to, and draw further examples from, the second half of the passage (868-921). As stated at the beginning of the chapter, the observations made in this concluding section potentially have implications for the study of Aristophanes' work as a whole.

As we have seen in the course of this chapter, one of the most active aspects of Aristophanes' craftsmanship displayed in this passage is his use of metre. Since the interaction between rhythm and diction forms a central part of the following discussion, I have included a metrical analysis of the second half of this passage as an appendix.

The Interrelation of Rhythm and Diction: 'Clash', 'Coincidence' and Metrical Exuberance

An intriguing aspect of the *Peace* passage which our analysis has highlighted is the constant fluctuation of both the register of the diction and the degree to which the metre is tragic-compatible. More fascinating still are the ways in which the diction and metre interrelate: there is an ongoing oscillation between the 'clash' and 'coincidence' of their respective registers. As a preliminary to discussing this interrelation in greater detail, let us briefly re-examine a short excerpt from the passage, 841-4, in order to remind ourselves of some of the forms that these clashes and coincidences can take:

> ἰπνοὺς ἔχοντες, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἰπνοῖσι πῦρ.
> ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' ὡς τάχιστα ταυτηνὶ λαβών,
> καὶ τὴν πύελον κατάκλυζε καὶ θέρμαιν' ὕδωρ,
> στόρνυ τ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τῇδε κουρίδιον λέχος·

The diction of the first line of this excerpt is probably best described as neutral (leaving aside the problem of ἰπνός for the moment). However, a certain heightening of tone is achieved by a combination of the strictly tragic-compatible metre and the presence of the poetic-cum-archaic dative plural ἰπνοῖσι. The metre remains strictly tragic-compatible in 842, but the register of the diction fails to correspond: Aristophanes introduces the colloquial lexical item ταυτηνί. In the following line the (non-)elevation of the metre and diction do match. The introduction of two non-elevated lexical items πύελος and κατάκλυζω is accompanied by what might be described as a dip in metrical tone, namely second and third 'foot' anapaests. The rhythm of the last metron of 843 and the first of 844 is once again strictly tragic-compatible, but with the introduction of κουρίδιον λέχος in 844 there is a new clash between the levels to which the diction and metre are elevated. The phrase is a Homeric quotation and as such is

to be thought elevated, but its introduction results in a deeply untragic 'fifth foot' anapaest.

In these four lines, then, we have a glimpse of two distinct phenomena. In the first place we have what I have called a 'clash' between diction and metre, where one is elevated, the other not. For the listener hearing the phrase κουρίδιον λέχος, for example, there is a perceptible gap between the elevated register of the diction and the less-rather-than-more tragic nature of the metre (this perceptible gap also exists with the introduction of ταυτηνί, although in this latter instance, the rhythm and diction 'clash' in the opposite way). Such 'clashes' are to be regarded as a subset of 'collisions'. The term 'collision' may be used to describe the juxtaposition of *any* two textual features of different register. Thus, there may be a collision between two lexical features; between diction and syntax; between metre and form, and so on. The term 'clash' will only be used to describe a disparity between metre and diction.

Before discussing Aristophanes' use of 'clashes' at greater length, I shall briefly outline a separate feature of this excerpt. Quite distinct from 'clashes' are points in the text where the tone of the diction and metre both change at the same point and in the same way. In line 843, for example, the unelevated rhythm and diction of the phrase πύελον κατάκλυζε is swiftly followed by metra of strictly tragic rhythm containing elevated diction - θέρμαιν' ὕδωρ / στόρνυ τ' ἐμοι... . This phenomenon I shall refer to as 'coincidence'. In regard to 'coincidences' it will be noted that the tone of the diction and metre seldom remain parallel for long. In 842, for example, the elevated register of the diction and rhythm is broken by the colloquial ταυτηνί, as we have seen (a 'clash'). This said, it must be recognized that on occasion the register of the diction and rhythm may both change simultaneously and so continue to complement one another. Such is the case at 819-23, for example (discussed above).

Of these two phenomena, clashes are by far the more common. Other examples from the passage include 834 (μάλιστα) and 891 (τουτί), for example, both found in tragic-compatible lines. It will be noted that, as with these latter examples, a clash more usually comprises a low item of diction juxtaposed with elevated, tragic-compatible metre than vice versa. In the light of this fact, it would appear a natural progression to examine the use of obscene language in clashes, since obscenity constitutes the lowest register of language. Indeed, given

that Aristophanes can achieve an effect from the use of an item such as ταυτηνί or τουτί in a tragic-compatible line, it will come as no surprise that he also juxtaposes obscene items with tragic-compatible rhythm, thereby achieving an effect of a different order. Informed by our discussion in Chapter Three, let us now examine the way in which Aristophanes uses obscene language in the passage.

Obscenity is an ingredient almost absent from the first half of the passage, the only obscene innuendo coming at 855, a line whose rhythm is strictly tragic-compatible.

λείχειν ἄρ' αὐτῇ κἀνθάδε σκευαστέον.

Here, the tonally low *double entendre* is thrown into greater relief owing to its presence in a line whose rhythm is tonally elevated. We might now ask ourselves just how often there is a clash between either a primary obscenity or obscene *double entendre* and its metrical surroundings. A glimpse at the 54 lines comprising the second half of this passage produces startling results. The following are the primary obscenities in lines 868-921. At 868, we find the coinage πρωκτοπεντετηρίς; at 902 the item προσκινήσεται; ἀπεψωλημένος at 903; and at 870, 880 and 898 πέος.

870 καὶ τἄλλ' ἁπαξάπαντα· τοῦ πέους δὲ δεῖ.

876 ὅσην ἔχει τὴν πρωκτοπεντετηρίδα.

879-80 τὸ δεῖν', εἰς Ἴσθμια
σκηνὴν ἐμαυτοῦ τῷ πέει καταλαμβάνω.

898 παίειν, ὀρύττειν, πὺξ ὁμοῦ καὶ τῷ πέει·

902 φυσῶντα καὶ πνέοντα προσκινήσεται·

903 ἕτεροι δὲ κείσονται γ' ἀπεψωλημένοι.

In most of these examples, the primary obscenities occur in tragic-compatible verse (the chief exception being 880, which contains a fifth-foot anapaest); and in

all of the examples, the primary obscenities are found in metra of strictly tragic-compatible rhythm which are themselves preceded by at least one more strictly tragic-compatible metron. It is of interest to note that πυγή at 876 (an unambiguous, but not quite obscene lexical item) is also to be found at the end of a verse of strictly tragic-compatible rhythm:[135]

868 ἡ παῖς λέλουται καὶ τὰ τῆς πυγῆς καλά.

What does this observation about primary obscenities entail? I do not wish to imply that all tightening of metre in Aristophanic verse is a prelude to a primary obscenity. This is clearly not the case. *Inter alia*, metrical tightening may yield tragic parody or a clash with a low (but not obscene) item of diction.[136] My point is simply as follows: in this passage from the *Peace*, the introduction of primary obscenities habitually coincides with the tightening of the metre. To repeat, whilst this phenomenon no doubt occurs elsewhere in the Aristophanic corpus, it is neither the case that tragic-compatible metre always yields a primary obscenity nor, indeed, that outside this passage Aristophanes' primary obscenities always coincide with tragic-compatible metre.[137] Now let us consider the possible effects of these clashes on the audience.

The disparity between the tone of the form and that of the content no doubt has the primary effect of throwing the force of the obscene words into greater relief: the elevation of metre habitually intensifies the shock which the introduction of obscene items characteristically causes. However, one wonders whether such tightening of metre might also serve another purpose. It could be argued that metrical tightening may, paradoxically, provide Aristophanes with a subtle method of preparing his audience for - or in other words *warning* them of - the imminent appearance of primary obscenities. This 'warning' would have the advantage of mitigating the abruptness of the references to the private sphere

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[135]Henderson 1991 describes πυγή as a direct (40) but 'mild word' (65), 'often with no more vulgarity of tone than English "rump"' (201). Olson 1998 notes, *ad loc.*, that τῆς πυγῆς comes παρὰ προσδοκίαν for τῆς τύχης.

[136]Schlesinger 1937, 302, suggests that the absence of resolutions in a line is a possible indication of parody.

[137]The question of the relationship between primary obscenities and Aristophanes' use of metre outside this passage is naturally of interest, but remains beyond the scope of the present discussion.

which the unsignalled introduction of a primary obscenity would otherwise constitute. Naturally, to maintain this hypothesis one would have to argue that the audience is aware of the possibility that metrical tightening is a prelude to obscene expression, either consciously or (more plausibly) subconsciously. One could argue that the repetition in the *Peace* passage of the formula 'metrical tightening *plus* obscenity' serves to arouse such awareness. In these warnings we would have in miniature something analogous to the technique we observed earlier whereby Aristophanes sometimes prepares his audience for primary obscenities by means of *double entendres*. The scene mentioned in this context (in Chapter Three) was the dialogue between Dikaiopolis and the Megarian, *Akharnians* 750-818. There, χοῖρος is used as a *double entendre* a number of times before the obscene κύσθος is introduced (782). Indeed, in the *Peace* passage too the *double entendre* λείχειν (856) precedes the introduction of primary obscenities.[138]

There may, then, be two advantages to Aristophanes of tightening the metre before introducing primary obscenities. First, the construction of a clash between form and content is felicitous for Aristophanes *qua* humorist - a clash throws the obscenity into greater relief. Second, the tightening of metre may serve to raise faint (and most likely subconscious) expectations in the audience and thus heighten their awareness of the text.[139]

In the light of the suggestion that metrical elevation may help cushion the impact of primary obscenities, it is interesting to observe that tightening of metre does not habitually occur in this passage before obscene *double entendres*. Indeed, instances where *double entendres are* preceded by tragic-compatible metra are the exception rather than the rule (λείχειν, 856; ἐπαίομεν, 874). More typical is the less-rather-than-more tragic-compatible rhythm of 891-3, where the obscene *double entendres* ὀπτάνιον and λάσανα are to be found:[140]

Τρ. τουτὶ δ' ὁρᾶτε τοὐπτάνιον.

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[138]Note that the not-quite-obscene words κινεῖν (867) and πυγή (868) act as a buffer before the primary obscenity πέος (870).

[139]Thus metrical tightening acts as a subtle 'frame'.

[140]Olson's text (1998) reads: τουτὶ δ', ὁρᾶτ', ὀπτάνιον ὑμῖν. / ὡς καλόν. Whichever reading is correct, my point remains unaffected.

Οι. οἴμ' ὡς καλόν.
διὰ ταῦτα καὶ κεκάπνικεν ἆρ'· κἀνταῦθα γὰρ
πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου τὰ λάσανα τῇ βουλῇ ποτ' ἦν.

In considering the difference in treatment between primary obscenities and *double entendres* the following factors may be relevant. First, that a *double entendre* constitutes a less direct reference than a primary obscenity to the object or action to which it refers; and second, that since the unravelling of a *double entendre* involves a contribution from the listener that a primary obscenity does not, the listener regards himself as sharing the responsibility for endowing the phrase with an obscene force. We might also note in passing that the collocation of tragic-compatible metre and *double entendres* does not constitute a 'clash' in the strict sense defined. It is not the tone of the metre and the diction which diverge, rather it is that of the metre and the implied *subject matter*.

By now it will be obvious that careful attention to the rhythm of Aristophanes' text is central to an appreciation of his work. What is more, awareness of Aristophanes' use of 'clash' and 'coincidence' (and of obscenity) greatly enhances the appreciation of a passage such as the following, 894-8, from the beginning of the short speech delivered by Trygaios immediately preceding the second mini-choral ode.[141]

Τρ. ἔπειτ' ἀγῶνά γ' εὐθὺς ἐξέσται ποεῖν
ταύτην ἔχουσιν αὔριον καλὸν πάνυ,
ἐπὶ γῆς παλαίειν, τετραποδηδὸν ἑστάναι 896a
πλαγίαν καταβάλλειν, εἰς γόνατα κύβδ' ἱστάναι, 896b
καὶ παγκράτιόν γ' ὑπαλειψαμένοις νεανικῶς
παίειν, ὀρύττειν, πὺξ ὁμοῦ καὶ τῷ πέει·

Two features serve to heighten the first two lines, 894-5. Not only is the metre strictly tragic-compatible, but there is also the non-standard hyperbaton between noun and adjective in the phrase ἀγῶνά...καλὸν.[142] Line 896a begins with a first 'foot' anapaest - not itself untragic - but is followed by an unelevated fourth 'foot' anapaest, this sudden dip in metre being accompanied by the *hapax*

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[141] On the *double entendres* in this passage, see esp. Olson 1998, *ad loc.*

[142] On the standard nature of ποεῖν, see Jebb 1892 on Soph. *Tr.* 120 and appendix, *ad loc.*

legemenon τετραποδηδόν. It is not unreasonable to suppose that upon meeting the phrase of which this word is a part, τετραποδηδὸν ἑστάναι, the listener becomes aware of the sexual nature of the imagery in this passage and thus in 896a we witness something akin to the 'coincidences' we saw earlier. That is, just as the listener perceives a dip in metrical tone he also perceives the unelevated tone of the subject matter. Whereas the *double entendres* of the next two lines, 896b-7, are accompanied by metre of less-rather-than-more tragic rhythm, in 898 the metre once again tightens. This latter line contains no resolutions, a penthemimeral caesura - and a 'clash' in the form of τῷ πέει (presented παρὰ προσδοκίαν instead of τὼ σκέλει: RVΓ, RV^{bis}Γ).

There are two further points of interest in this excerpt which mirror phenomena discussed in the earlier analysis. First is the metrical exuberance displayed in 897. When discussing Aristophanes' treatment of dithyrambic poetry we observed that at a crucial moment the rhythm of a word or group of words may be compatible with a non-iambic metre, despite their occurrence in an ostensibly iambic line. For example, διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων (829) scans as a glyconic (ꝏ—UU—U—) and ξυνελέγοντ' ἀναβολάς (830) as two feet of first paeans (UUU—). In the present excerpt, the rhythm of 896b is glaringly untragic and contains first and second 'foot' anapaests plus a resolution of the fourth princeps. This anapaestic rhythm is picked up in 897, a line whose rhythm is of particular interest. The resolutions and word-division contained in the line are such that the first two iambic metra could alternatively be scanned as four 'feet' of a marching anapaest - καὶ παγκράτιόν γ' ὑπαλειψαμένοις (— — UU— ⏑UU— UU—).[143] Interestingly, this anapaestic rhythm is followed by four metra of strictly tragic-compatible rhythm. Again, this is also a phenomenon observed earlier: a line's or phrase's less-rather-than-more tragic-compatible rhythm may be highlighted through its juxtaposition alongside metra of strictly tragic-compatible rhythm. Such is the case, for example, with κουρίδιον λέχος at 844, a

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[143]On this metre, see West 1982, 53-4. The first 'foot' of an anapaestic sequence is frequently spondaic. It is, however, usual for an anapaestic dimeter to be catalectic. Tonally, the rhythm may serve to pull the listener in two directions. On the one hand, the rhythm is less than tragic; on the other, as Dover 1997, 161, comments: 'dactylic and anapaestic rhythms have a double association with moralizing dicta and proverbs, and with heroic narrative.'

phrase which produces an untragic 'fifth foot' anapaest and is flanked by strict iambic metra.[144]

The second point of interest is ὀρύττειν. As mentioned in the previous chapter, LSJ[8] lists a '*sens. obsc.*' - despite insufficient evidence, as I have argued. In the light of problems encountered in the course of the analysis of the *Peace* passage - such as those connected with ἰπνός or κατακλύζω - it would appear appropriate to be wary concerning the lexemes listed by LSJ. In particular, it is wise to remember that the lexicon only rarely takes full account of the period of a lexeme's use and is seldom concerned with a lexeme's tone or register.[145]

At this stage some brief comments ought to be made about the rôle of other aural effects, namely alliteration, assonance and rhyme. As stated in the previous chapter, these features can often serve to heighten the listener's awareness of the text in question. Sometimes alliteration, assonance or rhyme accompanies the tightening or relaxation of metre (e.g. κατάκλυζε καί, 843; ἀγαθὰ παραδώσω, 888); sometimes the introduction of primary obscenities (e.g. καὶ τἄλλ' ἀπαξάπαντα· τοῦ πέους δὲ δεῖ, 870); sometimes both (δέσποτα...πρωκτοπεντετηρίδα, 875-6). This said, the occurrence of such sound effects is certainly not restricted to these occasions. Indeed, sound effects often seem to serve little more purpose than to add variety to the text (doubtless an important function in itself). Heavily repeated patterns may, however, confer a sense of vivacity or exuberance, so much so that the listener regards the text as nested within a 'Playful' frame. Such may be the effect of the bizarre *figura etymologica* κέλης κέλητι παρακελητιεῖ (900), for example, or of the alliteration in /s/ of the phrase καταθήσομαι γὰρ αὐτὸς εἰς μέσους σ' ἄγων (882).

To be sure, my main focus in this section has been on diction and metre. It ought also to be clear, however, that other features such as syntax and form may play an important supplementary rôle in the heightening (or lowering) of the register of the text. We have already observed how the dative plural -οισι serves to elevate the text of 841, for example, and that the slave's repetition of the interrogative πόθεν; in place of the relative ὁπόθεν...; (847) has the opposite effect.

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[144]It is not uncommon for a clash involving an obscene lexeme to be followed immediately by a metron of less-rather-than-more tragic rhythm, e.g. *Pax* 880: τῷ πέει καταλαμβάνω.

[145]On criticism of LSJ, see below, Chapter 4, n.39.

Textual Variety and the Model of Humour Perception

In the last section we discussed clashes at length and noted their relationship with collisions. By this focus on clashes I do not wish to imply that other kinds of collision are absent from the passage. As we have seen in the course of the analysis, there are a number of points where features other than diction and metre collide - there are, for example, collisions between diction and syntax, as at *Peace* 866, where Aristophanes uses the phrase ὄχημα κανθάρου. As discussed earlier, the use of ὄχημα plus the genitive is a tragic idiom and so this syntax collides with the everyday lexical feature κανθάρου.

Collisions (including clashes) belong to a larger group of textual features which play a rôle in endowing Aristophanes' poetry, at the micro-level, with constant variety of tone, register, sound, and so on. Judging from the *Peace* passage, it would appear that this 'textual variety', of which the pervasiveness of collisions is both a symptom and a cause, is an important characteristic of Aristophanic poetry. Other features which contribute to the constantly changing texture of Aristophanes' verse include obscenity, *double entendres*, song, alliteration, metrical exuberance within iambic lines and, of course, 'ordinary' language. All these features are commodities which are drawn on at times, used and then put aside, often suddenly, often unpredictably. They all play their part in heightening the listener's awareness of the text and/or unsettling the listener by never allowing him to take for granted the tone, register or sound of the text to follow. As I have stressed throughout this analysis, the constantly changing tone of Aristophanic verse often conveys a sense of fun and liveliness, as a result of which the text is perceived as lying in a 'Playful' frame. That is, the qualities of the text are often such as to suggest to the listener that the occurrence of humour is on its way.

It is appropriate to finish these concluding remarks with some brief suggestions about the effects of collisions in particular, and of 'textual variety' in general, on the listener's classification of text in accordance with the model of humour perception. I proposed at the beginning of Chapter Four that collisions may often serve to blur the boundaries between serious and humorous discourse. By this is meant that it is not always easy for the listener to decide whether to

classify text in which collisions occur as 'serious' or 'humorous'. This blurring occurs, I believe, for the following reasons. Most typically in a collision, the diction or metre of the text establishes a set of expectations which are subsequently frustrated - ὄχημα is followed by κανθάρου, for example, and ταυτηνί appears in a line of strictly tragic-compatible rhythm. On the one hand, the similarity to frame abuse or maxim violation is clear: after all, frustration of expectation lies at the heart of the concept of frame abuse and maxim violation. On the other hand, it must be said that such frame abuse or maxim violation as occurs in collisions is subtle. Certainly it bears only a partial resemblance to the frame abuse found in a comedy sketch or a canned joke, say, in which the conventions associated with a social situation are exploited or in which the maxims of speech are patently violated. In sum, whilst collisions clearly do bear a resemblance to humour, a listener may well hesitate to call many collisions 'humorous'. What is more, even if a collision *is* thought 'humorous', the humour is likely to be considered somewhat muted, with little of the climax associated with other formats in which humour traditionally occurs such as those named above.[146] I would suggest that the other features which add to the 'textual variety' of Aristophanes' poetry also contribute to this blurring of humour and seriousness. Thus, Aristophanic verse when vibrant and alive with various textual features will certainly impinge as 'playful' and 'exuberant' (to use Silk's term once more), but is less readily classifiable in terms of humorous- or serious-mode discourse.

To conclude, the overall effect of Aristophanes' employment of collision, combined with other features which contribute to 'textual variety', is, I believe, that it often becomes difficult for the listener to categorize the text in terms of the four modes of discourse. In addition, this textual variety is often such as to cause the text to impinge as lively and vivacious and to be perceived as nested within a 'Playful' frame. Indeed, these are key - even defining - features of Aristophanic verse which the textual analysis has helped us to identify: the text changes tone throughout; is often perceived as lying in a 'Playful' frame, and often causes the border between humorous and serious discourse to be blurred for the listener.

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[146]To recap on the model of humour perception, in classifying text the listener makes a judgement as to whether the frame or maxims of speech have been abused or merely flouted. In the case of a collision, the frame abuse (or maxim abuse) involved is often subtle, thus making such a judgement problematic.

The detailed analysis of the *Peace* passage has proven instructive in two distinct ways. First, it has allowed the efficacy of the model of humour perception to be demonstrated in a rigorous fashion. Second, it has provided much interesting data about the micro-level of Aristophanes' text. Not all of the observations are surprising - the suggestion that Aristophanes' text displays a good deal of variety in features such as diction, sound and metre is hardly novel - but the intricacy of our analysis has nevertheless allowed us to observe just how deeply ingrained this textual variety is. Other data are more extraordinary. The interaction between metre and diction, for example, and the metrical tightening that we witness before the introduction of obscenities are particularly noteworthy. What is more, there is a specific quality of Aristophanes' text which the use of the model of humour perception has fortuitously allowed us to isolate, namely the playful blurring of the line between humorous and serious discourse. One might add, in the light of the results of our analysis, that this blurring is typical of Aristophanes' exuberance - it belongs to a nexus of 'playful' conceits which add to the vitality of his text and which are so characteristically Aristophanic.

Appendix: Text and Rhythms of *Peace* 868-921

Key

1anap.	first 'foot' anapaest
1,2anap.	first and second 'foot' anapaests
1pr.	resolution of first princeps
2(spl.)3pr.	split resolution of second princeps and resolution of third princeps
no res.	no resolution
5caes.	penthemimeral caesura
7caes.	hephthemimeral caesura
no caes.	no caesura
med.caes.	midline caesura
Pors.	violation of Porson's law
prep.mon.	prepositive monosyllable at caesura (generally avoided in tragedy)
tel.	telesillean
reiz.	reizianum
ia. tetr. (cat.)	iambic tetrameter (catalectic)
corr.	correption

Οι.	ἡ παῖς λέλουται καὶ τὰ τῆς πυγῆς καλά·		no res. 5caes.
	ὁ πλακοῦς πέπεπται, σησαμῆ ξύμπλάττεται,		1anap. 5caes.
	καὶ τἄλλ' ἀπαξάπαντα· τοῦ πέους δὲ δεῖ.	870	no res. 7caes.
Τρ.	ἴθι νυν ἀποδῶμεν τήνδε τὴν Θεωρίαν		1,2anap. 5caes.
	ἀνύσαντε τῇ βουλῇ.		
Οι.	τί; ταυτηνί; τί φῄς;		1anap. 7caes.
	αὐτὴ Θεωρία 'στιν, ἣν ἡμεῖς ποτε		no res. 7caes.
	ἐπαίομεν Βραυρωνάδ' ὑποπεπωκότες;		4pr. 7caes.
Τρ.	σάφ' ἴσθι, κἀλήφθη γε μόλις.		
Οι.	ὦ δέσποτα,		4pr. 7caes.
	ὅσην ἔχει τὴν πρωκτοπεντετηρίδα.		no res. no caes.

Τρ.	εἶέν· τίς ἐσθ' ὑμῶν δίκαιος, τίς ποτε;		no res. med. caes. Pors.
	τίς διαφυλάξει τήνδε τῇ βουλῇ λαβών;		1pr. 5caes.
	οὗτος, τί περιγράφεις;		
Οι.	τὸ δεῖν', εἰς Ἴσθμια		2pr. med. caes. prep.mon.
	σκηνὴν ἐμαυτοῦ τῷ πέει καταλαμβάνω.	880	5anap. 5caes.
Τρ.	οὔπω λέγεθ' ὑμεῖς τίς ὁ φυλάξων; δεῦρο σύ·		2anap. 3pr. 5caes. Pors.
	καταθήσομαι γὰρ αὐτὸς εἰς μέσους ‹σ'› ἄγων.		1anap. 5caes.
Οι.	ἐκεινοσὶ νεύει.		
Τρ.	τίς;		
Οι.	ὅστις; Ἀριφράδης,		5pr. 7caes.
	ἄγειν παρ' αὐτὸν ἀντιβολῶν.		
Τρ.	ἀλλ', ὦ μέλε,		4anap. 5caes.
	τὸν ζωμὸν αὐτῆς προσπεσὼν ἐκλάψεται.		no res. 5caes.
	ἄγε δὴ σὺ κατάθου πρῶτα τὰ σκεύη χαμαί.		1anap. 2pr 5caes.
	βουλή, πρυτάνεις, ὁρᾶτε τὴν Θεωρίαν.		2anap. 7caes.
	σκέψασθ' ὅσ' ὑμῖν ἀγαθὰ παραδώσω φέρων,		3,4pr. 5caes.
	ὥστ' εὐθέως ἄραντας ὑμᾶς τῷ σκέλει		no res. 7caes. Pors.
	ταύτης μετεώρω κᾆτ' ἀγαγεῖν Ἀνάρρυσιν.	890	2,4anap. 5caes.
	τουτὶ δ' ὁρᾶτε τοὐπτάνιον.		
Οι.	οἴμ' ὡς καλόν.		4pr. 5caes.
	διὰ ταῦτα καὶ κεκάπνικεν ἆρ'· ἐνταῦθα γὰρ		1anap. 3pr. 7caes.
	πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου τὰ λάσανα τῇ βουλῇ ποτ' ἦν.		2anap. 3pr. 5caes. prep.mon.
Τρ.	ἔπειτ' ἀγῶνά γ' εὐθὺς ἐξέσται ποεῖν		no res. 5caes.
	ταύτην ἔχουσιν αὔριον καλὸν πάνυ,		no res. 5caes.
	ἐπὶ γῆς παλαίειν, τετραποδηδὸν ἑστάναι		1anap. 3pr. 5caes.
	πλαγίαν καταβάλλειν, εἰς γόνατα κύβδ' ἱστάναι,		1,2anap. 4pr. 5caes. Pors.
	καὶ παγκράτιόν γ' ὑπαλειψαμένοις νεανικῶς		2,3,4anap. no caes.
	παίειν, ὀρύττειν, πὺξ ὁμοῦ καὶ τῷ πέει·		no res. 5caes.
	τρίτῃ δὲ μετὰ ταῦθ' ἱπποδρομίαν ἄξετε,		2,4pr. 5caes.
	ἵνα δὴ κέλης κέλητι παρακελητιεῖ,	900	1anap. 4pr. 7caes.
	ἅρματα δ' ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἀνατετραμμένα		1,4pr. 7caes.
	φυσῶντα καὶ πνέοντα προσκινήσεται·		no res. 7caes.

	ἕτεροι δὲ κείσονται γ' ἀπεψωλημένοι		1anap. med.caes.
	περὶ ταῖσι καμπαῖς ἡνίοχοι πεπτωκότες.		1,4anap. 5caes.
	ἀλλ', ὦ πρυτάνεις, δέχεσθε τὴν Θεωρίαν.		2anap. 7caes.
	θέασ' ὡς προθύμως ὁ πρύτανις παρεδέξατο.		1,5anap. 3pr. 5caes.
	ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄν, εἴ τι προῖκα προσαγαγεῖν σ' ἔδει,		4pr. 5caes.
	ἀλλ' ηὗρον ἄν σ' ὑπέχοντα τὴν ἐκεχειρίαν.		3,5anap. 7caes.
Χο.	ἦ χρηστὸς ἀνὴρ πολί–		tel.
	ταις ἐστὶν ἅπασιν ὅσ–	910	tel.
	τις ἐστὶ τοιοῦτος.		reiz. corr.
Τρ.	ὅταν τρυγᾶτ', εἴσεσθε πολλῷ μᾶλλον οἷός εἰμι.		ia. tetram. cat.
Χο.	καὶ νῦν σύ γε δῆλος εἶ·		tel.
	σωτὴρ γὰρ ἅπασιν ἀν–		tel.
	θρώποις γεγένησαι.		reiz.
Τρ.	τί δῆτ', ἐπειδὰν ἐκπίῃς οἴνου νέου λεπαστήν.		ia. tetr. cat.
Χο.	καὶ πλήν γε τῶν θεῶν ἀεί σ' ἡγησόμεσθα πρῶτον.		ia. tetr. cat.
Τρ.	πολλῶν γὰρ ὑμῖν ἄξιος		
	Τρυγαῖος Ἀθμονεὺς ἐγώ,		ia. tetr.
	δεινῶν ἀπαλλάξας πόνων		
	τὸν δημότην ὅμιλον		ia. tetr. cat.
	καὶ τὸν γεωργικὸν λεών,		
	Ὑπέρβολόν τε παύσας.		ia. tetr. cat.

Conclusions

As stated in the introduction, this thesis is offered as a contribution to humour theory as well as to the elucidation of Aristophanes. Its more significant contributions to these fields include the articulation of 'The Modal Theory of Text Classification'; the examination of the possible effects of obscenity on Aristophanes' original audience; the articulation of a system of textual analysis by which Aristophanes' verse may be scrutinized; and the elucidation of the way in which Aristophanes' text is exuberant and playful, most especially in terms of the interaction between diction and metre. In these concluding remarks, I shall not only review what has been discovered, but also consider areas that have been touched on only briefly or not at all in the course of my investigations and which might benefit from future research.

In Section A, *Humour*, the phenomenon of humour is investigated in 'pragmatic' terms - that is, in terms of its perception by a listener. A novel definition of humour is proposed as an alternative to the essentialist models proposed by American humour theorists such as Raskin and Attardo. My model of humour perception attempts to map the intuitive processes by which a listener decides whether or not the text he is reading or listening to is humorous. I name my model 'The Modal Theory of Text Classification', humour being, I argue, one of four modes of discourse into which a listener may classify text. I subsequently test this model of humour perception by seeing how it accounts for the humorous nature of a variety of excerpts from Aristophanes.

In the two chapters that comprise Section A, I seek to articulate my theory of humour in as concise a way as possible. I do not claim to have explored exhaustively all the implications of the model. Indeed, I choose to omit material that is not of relevance to the analysis of Aristophanic verse, such as various discussions on the consequences of the model for the interlocutors in a conversation. In addition, the confines of space and the subject matter of the thesis dictate that the model be exemplified by only a handful of modern texts, the result of this being that its range of applicability has only been hinted at rather than fully demonstrated. Outside the classical

sphere, it would, I believe, be interesting to use my model to analyse conversational excerpts or modern situation comedies (complete with their real or canned laughter, indicating the genuine or putative perception of humour).

In Section B, *Obscenity*, Greek attitudes towards both obscenity and humour are examined and I suggest that there is a strong link between the two in classical Greek thought. In addition, modern examples of the use and occurrence of obscene language are adduced to help explain and examine its function in Old Comedy. The main suggestion resulting from this examination is that obscenity can have a cohesive and relaxing effect on a group. This view is offered as an alternative and complement to Henderson's view that obscene language is a substitute for physical violence and provides a new way of understanding the reception of obscenity by the original audience of Aristophanic drama.

One consequence of my discussion of obscene language is to highlight the possibility of re-examining the suggestions put forward by Henderson in *The Maculate Muse* (1975, revised 1991). Although the alternative way of understanding obscenity articulated in this chapter is not intended to replace Henderson's approach, certain aspects of his argument and emphasis are nevertheless questioned. These include the rôle of visualization (i.e. of picturing the obscene act or object) in 'degradation' and the lack of attention given by Henderson to the humorous potential of obscene language.

In Section C, *Aristophanes*, a system of textual analysis is outlined which is then used to make a detailed examination of a section of Aristophanic verse (*Peace* 819-921). The systematic textual analysis of Aristophanes' Greek allows as many of the factors as possible affecting a listener's classification of text to be taken into account. The examination of the *Peace* passage demonstrates my model of humour perception in use in relation to an extended piece of Aristophanic verse and also allows us to scrutinize the constantly changing, 'playful' nature of Aristophanes' verse. This analysis highlights a number of interesting features of Aristophanes' style in the passage. These include the 'clash' and 'coincidence' of diction and metre; the habitual tightening of the metre preceding the introduction of obscenities; the constant textual variety displayed by Aristophanes' verse; and his characteristic blurring of the boundary between serious- and humorous-mode discourse.

The system of textual analysis outlined in Chapter Four has, I suggest, proven to be a powerful tool for examining Aristophanic verse and may well have applications for other branches of Aristophanic scholarship. One thinks especially of commentaries. Assumptions similar to those outlined in this chapter are made implicitly by commentators on Aristophanes, but seldom explicitly - yet the articulation of a set of formulae which govern the scholarship of commentators could well prove useful for the reader. No doubt such rigour could also benefit writers of commentaries on the texts of other authors.

The analysis of the *Peace* passage in Chapter Five has thrown up some interesting results. Whilst the suggestion that Aristophanes' text displays a good deal of variety in areas such as diction, sound and metre is hardly original, the depth and intricacy of analysis that the methodology articulated in Chapter Four allowed has nonetheless been revealing. The interaction between metre and diction, for example, surely merits further investigation: does this interplay pervade Aristophanes or is it more prevalent in some passages than others? More intriguing still is the metrical tightening we witness in this passage before the introduction of obscenities. A glance at other Aristophanic passages appears to indicate that Aristophanes does not always employ this technique. When, then, does he employ it and to what effect? To answer these questions satisfactorily, one suspects that many more similar analyses of Aristophanic passages need to be performed.

I hope in this thesis to have posed some significant questions and to have answered them in a new way. It has been fascinating to investigate the mechanics of humour and obscenity, especially their use by an author such as Aristophanes whose verse, as we have seen, is characterized by its dizzying liveliness. The promotion of humour and obscenity to a stage where they can receive scholarly attention is, needless to say, a recent occurrence, and I am glad if, in the writing of this thesis, I have made a small contribution to these exciting areas of scholarship and to have demonstrated further the potential rewards their investigation holds for the researcher.

Appendix

Aristophanes on How to Compose: What You Wear is What You Are.[1]

In this thesis I have set out a theory of verbal humour and exemplified it with Aristophanes. It is no doubt instructive to compare this with Aristophanes' own theory of humour. At first glance this task may appear impracticable, since Aristophanes does not ever set out his own compositional procedures in this way. Whilst he is never explicit about the composition of *comedy*, however, there are nevertheless points in his plays where Aristophanes provides us with an insight into his views on the composition of *other* genres. Most notably, on two separate occasions Aristophanes depicts tragic poets in the act of composing text (Euripides and Agathon), both of whom are witnessed by characters who must themselves soon compose convincing speeches (Dikaiopolis and the Inlaw). At *Akharnians* 395ff., Euripides is disturbed mid-composition by Dikaiopolis, whereas at *Thesmophoriazousai* 37ff., the audience sees Agathon compose a passage of lyric whilst the characters of Euripides and the Inlaw look on. It is these two passages which will form the subject of the present discussion, the chief aim of which will be to shed some light on Aristophanes' own compositional processes as a humorous writer.

I

In the *Akharnians* we encounter a figure, Dikaiopolis, who is represented as needing to perform an act of composition. According to the plot of the play, Dikaiopolis has staked his life on his ability to produce, for a violently anti-Laconian audience, a speech in defence of the Spartans.

Much of this play is paratragic and makes specific use of Euripides' now fragmentary *Telephos*: Aristophanes has borrowed elements from this play's plot

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[1] A revised version of this appendix is being considered for publication in a volume of conference proceedings.

and has transplanted them into the *Akharnians*.[2] Various plot developments which were no doubt logically sequential in the *Telephos* appear in the *Akharnians* where they are no longer logically sequential. An example of such a non-sequitur is the necessity, expressed by Dikaiopolis, for a tragic speech delivered in ragged clothes.[3] The visit to Euripides' house, the need for which is announced at 394, is undertaken for the purpose of acquiring these clothes, which will enable the composition of a *Telephos*-style speech. At 384-5, Aristophanes has Dikaiopolis say:

> νῦν οὖν με πρῶτον πρὶν λέγειν ἐάσατε
> ἐνσκευάσασθαί μ' οἷον ἀθλιώτατον.
>
> So now, before I speak, please let me dress myself up as piteously as I can.

Dikaiopolis is thus presented as expounding the view that, before being able to compose, an author must have dressed himself in the appropriate garb.

Aristophanes has Dikaiopolis beg both garments and a number of properties from Euripides, such as πιλίδιον...τὸ Μύσιον, a Mysian felt cap (439), πτωχικοῦ βακτηρίου, a beggar's staff (448), χυτρίδιον σφογγίῳ βεβυσμένον, a small jar plugged with a sponge (463), and σκάνδικα, wild chervil (478).[4] The items borrowed most likely correspond to those used by Telephos in the Euripidean play,[5] with the addition of a handful of properties introduced for a joke at the expense of Euripides, the standard comic slander being that his mother was a vegetable seller.[6]

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[2]For reconstructions of the *Telephos*, see Handley and Rae 1957; Jouan 1966, 222-55; Rau 1967, 19-26; Webster 1967, 43-8, and Heath 1987b. On the exploitation of this tragedy by Aristophanes, see Newiger 1957, 123-4 and Foley 1988, esp. 39-47.

[3]A characteristic moment of Aristophanic imagist unpredictability as discussed in Chapter 2.

[4]Ruck 1975, 16ff., argues that σκάνδιξ is not to be identified as wild chervil, but rather a plant which was considered to be mind-altering and an aphrodisiac. Thus, inspired by this herb, Euripides was able to write his poetry.

[5]Thus Rogers 1910 on 453.

[6]Humorous references to the profession of Euripides' mother include *Thesm.* 387, 456 and *Ran.* 840. Ruck 1975, 14 ff., argues that the joke is rather that Euripides' mother trades in aphrodisiacs, and that this accounts for the salacious nature of his plays (cf. n.4 above).

The clothes and properties of Telephos would appear to act as a catalyst: without them, Dikaiopolis is represented as believing himself unable to make a speech; with them, Dikaiopolis is rendered a deft speaker, shown to be capable of convincing the chorus of Akharnians that he is indeed no traitor.[7]

Dikaiopolis is represented as changing in mood as he dons the clothes.[8] The influence of the clothes upon him is presented in terms of a drink or potion consumed. At 447, for example, he says:

> εὖ γ'· οἷον ἤδη ῥηματίων ἐμπίμπλαμαι
>
> That's good: how I'm filling up with deft phrases already!

Later, when Dikaiopolis is being shown as urging himself on to make the speech, he says (484):

> ἕστηκας οὐκ εἶ, καταπιὼν Εὐριπίδην;
>
> What, you stand still? Won't you move, now you've swallowed down a dose of Euripides?

This latter analogy is drawn from the realm of cock-fighting, where (instead of 'Euripides') cocks were primed with garlic to put them in the mood to fight.[9]

Of course, Dikaiopolis is not the only character in this scene whom we witness in the act of composition. When Dikaiopolis arrives at Euripides' house, we catch the poet in the midst of composing a tragedy. When we meet Euripides, we see him surrounded by various stage properties and costumes, a number of which, as we have seen, are eventually lent to Dikaiopolis. Our attention is first drawn to the presence of the costumes by Dikaiopolis' comment at 412-3:

> ἀτὰρ τί τὰ ῥάκι' ἐκ τραγῳδίας ἔχεις,
> ἐσθῆτ' ἐλεινήν; οὐκ ἐτὸς πτωχοὺς ποιεῖς.

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[7]Or as Muecke 1977, 63, says, 'by putting on the rags Dicaeopolis is automatically transformed into a highly articulate beggar.' Thus also Singleton (Murray) 1977, 150.

[8]See Rau 1967, 33-4, on this passage.

[9]Cf. the allusion to the priming of cocks with garlic at *Ach.* 166.

> But why have you got those tragic rags, 'a garb most pitiable'? No wonder you create beggars.

Directly before Dikaiopolis' comment on the clothes, however, our attention is directed towards Euripides' manner of composition. To compose, he sits with his feet up. Dikaiopolis says (410-11):

> ἀναβάδην ποιεῖς,
> ἐξὸν καταβάδην; οὐκ ἐτὸς χωλοὺς ποιεῖς.
>
> Do you compose with your feet up when you could have them down? No wonder you create cripples.[10]

Here, then, are two expressions of the view that the manner of composition determines the textual product. The connection is made between a playwright composing surrounded by ragged costumes and that playwright's production of characters who wear such costumes.[11] A similar connection is made between a playwright not using his legs whilst composing and his production of characters who are unable to use their legs.[12]

Like Dikaiopolis, Euripides is also represented as having to achieve an appropriate mood to allow the act of composition. Throughout the scene Euripides' mood is ~~associated with~~ made apparent by the way that his speech contains tragic vocabulary and phrasing, as at 449, where Aristophanes has him refer to his house as 'marble halls': λαΐνων σταθμῶν.[13] At the end of this episode, Euripides is represented as having been so annoyed by Dikaiopolis that the mood he requires for composing has been destroyed. He says at 470:

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[10]The scholia at 410 imply that ἀναβάδην is to be understood as 'high up, upstairs', whereas the scholia on 399 suggest the (surely superior) sense of 'with his feet up'. For good discussion of this point, see Russo 1994, 52-5. Ruck 1975, 20ff., ingeniously argues for the tempting translation 'with an erection'. καταβάδην is a *hapax legomenon*, a humorous coinage contrasting with ἀναβάδην.

[11]See Ruck ibid., 24ff., who argues that Euripides' use of rags is to be taken as a sign of the poet's lasciviousness.

[12]Or on Ruck's interpretation (see n.10 above), the poet and his characters are bent in two with erections, and so crippled in this way.

[13]On Aristophanes' use of tragic vocabulary in this passage, see Rau 1967, 31 and Muecke 1977, 63.

φροῦδά μοι τὰ δράματα.

my plays are gone.

II

This glimpse of Euripides composing is paralleled in the scene in the *Thesmophoriazousai* where we encounter the tragic poet Agathon. At line 101ff. the characters of the Inlaw and Euripides, like us, gain a surreptitious glimpse of Agathon in the process of composing a tragedy.[14] In this scene the poet is portrayed ~~composing~~ working on a hymn, where he takes on the parts of both the chorus and a priestess.[15] The actor playing Agathon would presumably have differentiated these two parts by appropriately altering his voice.

One of the reasons why this passage is so memorable is that Agathon is dressed in female clothing throughout. Although the exact nature of the costume worn by the original actor is not known to us, a certain amount of detail is provided in the script.[16] In the initial comments made about Agathon by the Inlaw, there is mention of κροκωτῷ, a saffron gown (138); κεκρυφάλῳ, a hair-net (138); στρόφιον, a breast-band (139), and κατόπτρου, a mirror (140). Later on in the scene, it is resolved that the Inlaw will dress as a woman in order to infiltrate the all-female festival of the Thesmophoria. To this end, Agathon is seen to be able to provide the Inlaw with certain properties, handed over in the following order: ξυρόν, a razor (219); ἱμάτιον, a mantle (250); the aforementioned στρόφιον, breast-band (251, 255), and κροκωτόν, saffron gown (253); κεκρυφάλου, a hair-

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[14]Aristotle comments on Agathon's poetry (*Poetics* 1456a26-30) that he was the first to write choral odes with themes separate from those of the play. Muecke 1982, 48, argues that the unexceptional lyrics of the hymn would have emphasized the musical content of the lyric.

[15]Muecke ibid., 47, emphasizes that Aristophanes has devised a way of showing Agathon in the *act* of composition. Showing the poet at work is certainly a striking dramatic device. On this scene, see also Singleton (Murray) 1977, 150ff.

[16]Csapo 1986 and Taplin 1987 identify the bell-crater Würzburg H5697 as portraying the scene from the play where the Inlaw (dressed, of course, in a number of Agathon's clothes) has seized the baby-cum-wine-skin (*Thesm.* 689ff.): see also Taplin 1993, 36-41. The artist is unlikely to have seen the original fifth-century production of the play, but Taplin argues that he may well have seen a touring production in Italy (1993, 89-99). See Rogers 1911 on *Thesm.* 257-8, and more especially Stone 1980, 407-8, concerning the nature of the items of clothing mentioned and how they might have been worn.

net (257); μίτρας, a bandeau (257); κεφαλὴ περίθετος, a hairpiece (258); ἔγκυκλον, a mantle (261); and ὑποδημάτων, shoes (262).

The order in which the clothes are lent may suggest that the Inlaw is putting the items on as Agathon is taking them off, and that, in consequence, at the end of the episode, the Inlaw is dressed as Agathon was at the episode's beginning.[17] After donning the clothes, the Inlaw is also shaved so that he is barefaced - just like Agathon (215-35). There is also instruction given to the Inlaw by the stage Euripides that the voice should be altered in order to be more convincing as a woman (267-8). This has a parallel in the modulation of the voice the audience has heard the character of Agathon use previously when he was composing the hymn. In short, the Inlaw is represented as having adopted Agathon's look *and* manner.

Just as Agathon here is comparable with Euripides in the *Akharnians* in that they are both glimpsed in the process of composing tragedy, there is a parallel between the Inlaw and Dikaiopolis. Both are seen to don clothes begged from playwrights and both the sets of clothes could be said to act as a catalyst. As we have seen, Dikaiopolis is represented as becoming a deft orator through the adoption of the borrowed clothes. Like Dikaiopolis, the Inlaw is also shown as going on to make a speech: one that is also delivered in a persona connected with the clothes worn. In the persona of a woman, he is seen to be able to enumerate many specifically female vices to the women celebrating the Thesmophoria (466 ff.). Thus the Inlaw is represented, in one respect, as having *become* a convincing woman, inasmuch as he is shown to speak knowledgeably concerning the female sphere. Similarly, Dikaiopolis is represented, in one respect, as having *become* Telephos. For both characters, the skills required for successful speech-making are in evidence once the borrowed clothes are donned, but not before.

Aristophanes has Agathon make some revealing comments about the nature of composition, which are in accordance with the view that the clothes worn by an author and his physical appearance determine the nature of the text composed. At 148-52 Aristophanes has Agathon say:

ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν ἐσθῆθ' ἅμα τῇ γνώμῃ φορῶ.

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[17]For this suggestion, see Muecke 1982, 50; *pace* Russo 1994, 51, who says, 'the female clothes required by Euripides all appear to be on the couch.' Zeitlin 1981, 178, talks of the 'transfer of Agathon's persona' to the Inlaw.

χρὴ γὰρ ποιητὴν ἄνδρα πρὸς τὰ δράματα
ἃ δεῖ ποιεῖν, πρὸς ταῦτα τοὺς τρόπους ἔχειν.
αὐτίκα γυνακεῖ' ἢν ποιῇ τις δράματα,
μετουσίαν δεῖ τῶν τρόπων τὸ σῶμ' ἔχειν.

I change my clothing accordingly as I change my mentality. A man who is a poet must adopt habits that match the plays he's committed to composing. For example, if one is writing about women, one's body must participate in their habits.

This logic is pursued and somewhat changed at 164-7, where Aristophanes has Agathon comment:

> καὶ Φρύνιχος – τούτον γὰρ οὖν ἀκήκοας –
> αὐτός τε καλὸς ἦν καὶ καλῶς ἠμπέσχετο·
> διὰ τοῦτ' ἄρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ κάλ' ἦν τὰ δράματα.
> ὅμοια γὰρ ποιεῖν ἀνάγκη τῇ φύσει.
>
> And Phrynikhos - you must have actually heard him sing - he was an attractive man and he also wore attractive clothes, and *that's* why his plays were attractive too. One just can't help creating work that reflects one's own nature.

This latter idea differs from the earlier one, in that here it is claimed that the poet's internal rather than external state is what is given expression in his work. Indeed, these two notions can only be reconciled if the additional claim is provided that the clothing donned by the poet effects an internal change.[18]

III

Let us summarize what these two passages imply about the act of composition:

(i) The stage properties possessed by a composer, his physical appearance and, above all, the clothes he wears have an effect on the end product (the composition).

(ii) In order to compose, an author may adopt an appearance appropriate to the character for whom he is composing.

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[18]See also n.46 below.

(iii) The donning of clothes can act like a potion, transforming the personality of the composer.

(iv) Composition entails the adoption of a mood. This mood can be destroyed, and the compositional process thereby ruined.

(v) The physical gestures employed by the composer affect the textual product.

Such are the implications of these passages. The question may now be asked whether the implicit notions are novel - an example of Aristophanic wit - or whether they represent beliefs which were standard in the fifth century. To anticipate my conclusions, the answer probably lies somewhere in the middle; that is, whilst Aristophanes taps the resource of contemporary beliefs held about composition, he also significantly develops them. Our evidence is difficult to assess, however, since all our major accounts of composition are post-Aristophanic. I shall first examine the similarities and differences between the view of composition presented by Aristophanes in these scenes and those expressed by other, later ancient writers, and then comment on the ramifications of the fact that these accounts post-date Aristophanes' era.

It is a view commonly espoused by ancient writers that poets compose either when divinely inspired or - from Plato onwards - when mad.[19] In the *Rhetoric*, for example, Aristotle claims that ἔνθεον...ἡ ποίησις, 'poetry is an inspired thing' (1408b19) and that poets are to be numbered amongst the ἐνθουσιάζοντες, the 'possessed' (1408b17).[20] The author of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* juxtaposes poets, soothsayers and sibyls, and claims that a certain Marakos was a better poet when he was mad (954a39-40).[21] In the

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[19]Singleton (Murray) 1977, Chapter 2 and Murray 1981 differentiates between early views of poetic 'inspiration' and later views of 'possession'. On Plato's contribution to views of the compositional process, see id. 1981, 87 and 1989b, 17-9, where she remarks on Plato's emphasis on (17) the 'passivity of the poet and the irrational nature of his composition'. She further comments (18), 'Plato may not have invented the notion of inspiration as a kind of enthusiasm (we find it already in Demokritos), but he was its most influential exponent, and he does seem to have been the first to connect poetic inspiration with madness (mania).' See also Nagy on 'Poetry and Inspiration' in Kennedy 1989, 24-9.

[20]On the meaning of ἔνθεος, see Dodds 1951, 87 n.41.

[21]On the significance of this passage, see Murray 1989b, 20.

Phaedrus, Plato claims that poets come under the influence of an ἀπὸ Μουσῶν...μανία, a 'madness from the Muses' (245a), and in the *de Oratore*, Cicero also claims that poets cannot compose *sine quodam afflatu quasi furoris*, 'without some kind of inspiration, like that of frenzy' (194). This inspiration or madness of a poet might be compared with the view expressed in the Aristophanic passages that an author undergoes a change in mood whilst composing, involving an alteration in his character.[22]

In Aristotle's *Poetics* as in Horace's *Ars Poetica* advice is offered to the would-be composer of a tragedy. Horace, for instance, advises (with an interesting aside to Telephos) (102-5):[23]

> si vis me flere, dolendum est
> primum ipsi tibi: tunc tua me infortunia laedent,
> Telephe vel Peleu; male si mandata loqueris,
> aut dormitabo aut ridebo.
>
> If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself: then, o Telephos or Peleus, will your misfortunes hurt me: if the words you utter are ill suited, I shall laugh or fall asleep.

Aristotle, at *Poetics* 1455a22-26, says that the poet should try to visualize the events he means to describe, keeping them πρὸ ὀμμάτων, 'before his eyes' - a view shared by Quintilian in his advice to orators at 6.2.29ff. Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian all agree that the more a poet experiences the emotions he is describing, the more persuasive he will be (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1455a30-32, 1448a19-24; Cicero *de Oratore* 189, 193-4; Quintilian 6.2.26). In a passage in the *Poetics*, Aristotle also advises the author composing speeches, ὅσα δὲ δυνατὸν καὶ τοῖς σχήμασιν συναπεργαζόμενον, 'as far as possible, to carry out the appropriate *skhêmasin* (most likely "gestures")' (1455a29-30).[24]

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[22]It ought to be noted, however, that at *Poet.* 1455a29-34, Aristotle differentiates between a poet's imaginative identification and μανία.

[23]On this passage Rudd 1989, *ad loc.*, notes that the notion that 'the actor reflects on the fortune and condition of the character he is portraying, and induces in himself the analogous emotion' belongs to the Peripatetic tradition: the use of *tua* (103) reinforces this identification between actor and character. See also Brink 1971, *ad loc.*

[24]For this view, see Lucas 1968 on this passage, and cf. Pl. *Rep.* 395c5. See also Ketterer 1980, 220, who argues for the importance of gesture amongst ancient dancers, dithyrambic poets and rhetoricians (cf. Athenaios 21f.). Lucas 1968, 177, cites instances of authors such as Ibsen, Trollope

The sentiments detailed in these passages come close to paralleling the views espoused about composition in the Aristophanic passages. As in Aristophanes, the view is expressed that an author requires a certain mood to enable him to compose and that he should, to some degree at least, emulate both mentally and physically the characters for whom he is writing dialogue.

What we do not see paralleled in any ancient work, however, is the view that an author should wear clothes appropriate to the character for whom he is composing. Amongst ancient accounts, this element of his portrayal of the compositional process is unique to Aristophanes. The positions later articulated by Plato and Aristotle dictate that the author should empathize with the character he is creating, that the author should experience the emotions he is attempting to convey, and even that he should make gestures appropriate to the character for whom he is composing.[25] If the views expressed by Aristotle and Plato were current in the fifth century also (but let us not *assume* this to be the case), then Aristophanes' model of the tragic poet at work has followed the logic of these beliefs through to an extreme conclusion: if the playwright should do all these things, then why should he not also dress up as his character and even, to a certain extent, *become* the character concerned?[26]

In creating his view of the poet in action Aristophanes has most likely been innovative in making a connection between beliefs about composition and a nexus of ancient beliefs concerning the importance of clothes. Often in ancient Greece, the donning of new clothes marked a change of status and the beginning of a new period in life.[27] Cross-dressing, for example, was a constituent part of

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and Dickens, who all performed gestures as a prelude to writing: see also Singleton (Murray) 1977, 171-3. Singleton (Murray) devotes a sizeable portion of her thesis (ibid., 148-81) to examining ancient views that (149), 'poets write most convincingly when they project themselves into the characters whom they portray'. She also discusses the passages cited here (and others).

[25]For a fuller discussion of these views, see again ibid., 148-81. She suggests, 181, that ancient views that the author should identify with the characters for whom he is writing are 'partly to be explained by the predominantly oral nature of ancient poetry.'

[26]On a parallel issue - namely dress being considered to be indicative of a man's moral or literary style - see Bramble 1974, 38-41 (most of whose examples are, admittedly, Roman).

[27]On changes of clothes in Aristophanes, see Stone 1980, Chapter 3 'Costume Changes' (398-445). She comments interestingly (404): 'The transformations...fall into two types. Those which include a change of mask are complete and lasting. When the character only changes his garments,

many male rites of passage ceremonies, the period of transvestism marking an intermittent period between boyhood and manhood.[28] Following this period, the boy would dress in adult clothes, his boyhood clothes having been divested for ever. In a number of city-states, girls would dress in male clothing at their weddings - in Argos, for example, the bride would wear a beard;[29] in Sparta, brides dressed in men's clothing and had their heads shaved.[30] Cross-dressing would also occur during the initiation into various mystery cults.[31] Other cross-dressers from the ancient world are the Enarêes amongst the Scythians, of whom Herodotos gives an account at 4.67 of his *Histories*. These were men who dressed as women and who had the gift of divination.[32]

Examples of the connection between the donning of clothes and a change of character also appear elsewhere in Aristophanes. As Bowie has shown, the women in the *Ekklesiazousai* are shown as taking on male characteristics when they don male clothing, and the reverse process is portrayed as happening to the men of the play.[33] In the *Wasps*, too, the change in character which Bdelykleon is represented as wanting to effect in his father - from a juror to a man of culture - is accompanied by a change of clothes.[34]

A question we are ill-equipped to answer, however, is whether post-Aristophanic accounts of the compositional process are also typical of fifth-century perspectives. The views expressed by ancient writers concerning composition certainly share much common ground, which makes it tempting to postulate an ancient consensus on the subject,[35] one from which Aristophanes has departed in ways just outlined. What must be borne in mind, however, is

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however, his real identity is retained, and with it he ultimately defeats any attempt at true transformation.'

[28]See *inter alia* van Gennep 1960, 172; Brelich 1969, passim; Seaford 1981, 259; Bowie 1993, passim, and Robson 1997, 68-70. Cf. Arist. *fr.* 15, quoted by Bowie 1993, 237, which says that the initiand does not learn (μαθεῖν), but experiences (παθεῖν), his change of state.

[29]*De Virt.* 4 (245). For discussion, see Bullough 1976, 115, and Robson 1997, 78-80.

[30]Plut. *Lyc.* 15.3.

[31]See especially Seaford 1981, 258-9.

[32]Cf. Hipp. *Aër*, 22 (293) and Hdt. 1.105.

[33]Bowie 1993, 257-60.

[34]Ibid., 93-4.

[35]Murray 1981 details important variations between different early Greek accounts of poetic inspiration, the most significant being (100), 'when [Plato] described inspiration as ἐνθουσιασμός.'

that the Aristophanic scenes discussed in this chapter might have contributed to the formation of these views.

Consequently, there are two extreme positions which might be taken concerning the influence of Aristophanes' treatment of composition, and no doubt a number of further positions tenable between these two extremes. The extreme positions are as follows:

(i) The account of composition given in the Aristophanic scenes is highly derivative of contemporary views and had no influence whatsoever on later accounts. Aristophanes drew on established views of composition to produce an inventive hybrid between these and the nexus of contemporary beliefs connected with clothing.

(ii) The two Aristophanic scenes discussed in this chapter inspired key elements of later, more scholarly accounts of the compositional process. That is, views such as those espoused by Aristotle and Horace were first formed *in*, and hence shaped *by*, these Aristophanic scenes.

The dearth of relevant sources makes a secure conclusion impossible. Although the interest in literary criticism in fifth-century Athens seems to have been vast, we are denied a proper overview of its nature since none of the numerous treatises written in the fifth century has come down to us intact.[36] Instead, to assess the nature of contemporary discussion, we must rely on scattered references and fragments of lost texts.

In his article 'Greek theories of art and literature down to 400 B. C.', Webster posits that the latter half of the fifth century was a period of intense research and formalization of views. He lists 'composition' as one of the elements of literary theory which, he believes, by Aristophanes' era had 'been worked out and reduced to a system'.[37] On the originality of Aristophanes' literary critical views Webster remains silent, the implication being that he would agree with what has become the *communis opinio*: namely, that the views on

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[36]For a brief account of these, see Lucas 1968, xx. Kennedy 1989, 185, briefly discusses rhetorical handbooks of this era.

[37]Webster 1939, 170.

literary criticism found in Aristophanes are either derivative or obviously playful (roughly, viewpoint (i)).[38]

Certainly, elements of the views contained both in the post-fifth century views outlined above do seem to have been current in or before Aristophanes' time.[39] For example, the notion that the poet was inspired - or even mad - may well pre-date Aristophanes,[40] and the belief that a poet's works are strongly autobiographical certainly does.[41] The technique of 'method composition'[42] which Aristophanes has the characters of both Agathon and Euripides employ could even have been inspired by - if not actually based on - contemporary notions of poetic composition. For example, the sentiment of the following lyric from Euripides' *Suppliant Women* (180-3), produced after the *Akharnians* but before the *Thesmophoriazousai*,[43] parallels notions with which we are familiar from the Aristophanic passages:

> τόν θ' ὑμνοποιὸν αὐτὸς ἂν τίκτῃ μέλη
> χαίροντα τίκτειν· ἢν δὲ μὴ πάσχῃ τόδε,
> οὔτοι δύναιτ' ἂν οἴκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος
> τέρπειν ἂν ἄλλους· οὐδὲ γὰρ δίκην ἔχει.

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[38]Proponents of this view include: Whitman 1964, 221; Rau 1975, 343; Hanson 1976, 165, and Stohn 1993, 205. For an opposing view, see Cantarella 1967, who nonetheless admits the possibility that Aristophanes' views are derivative (15).

[39]Summaries of which views are to be found in Webster 1939, Lucas 1968 and Harriott 1969. See also Murray 1981 and 1989b.

[40]Demokritos, *fr.* 17, 18 and 21, on which see Murray 1981, 99-100 and 1989b, 17-9. On the subject of Demokritos, Singleton (Murray) comments (1977, 87-8), 'we are not in a position to know exactly what Demokritos did say about poetic inspiration, because most of what he wrote is lost.' However, she adds in the light of a discussion of *Ach.* 395-400, that Plato may well not have been 'the originator of the concept of "furor poeticus"'. On the poet as mad, see Dodds 1951, 82. On direct inspiration from the Muses, see Webster 1939, 166; Dodds 1951, 80-2; Singleton (Murray) 1977, Chapter 2; Murray 1981; Calame 1995, 77; *Od.* 8.62-4, 8.487 ff., and 22.347-8; Hes. *Theog.* 22-32: Calame also has a useful appendix of relevant sources (202-12). For the poet as drunk (inspired, that is, in a different sense), see Arch. *fr.* 77 and Singleton (Murray) 1977, 123-38.

[41]On this issue see Lefkowitz 1978 and references therein. Cf. Ar. *fr.* 694 (Kassel and Austin 1984, 356): o[ἷ]α μὲν π[ο]εῖ λέγε[ι]ν / τοῖός ἐστιν.

[42]A term which I coin by analogy with 'method acting'.

[43]Guesses on the production date of the *Supplices* range from 424 to 417 BC. On its dating, see Collard 1975, 8-14, who himself opts for a date in the 420s.

> The poet bringing songs into the world
> should labour in joy. If this is not his mood,
> He cannot - being inwardly distressed -
> Give pleasure outwardly. That stands to reason.[44]

With all this pre-fourth-century evidence paralleling Aristophanes' view of literary theory, what could lead to a sentiment such as that expressed by Snell, then, that he is 'inclined to believe that the personal contribution of Aristophanes in these matters was very substantial'?[45] It can only be the suspicion that in these scenes, as elsewhere, Aristophanes has been highly inventive, but in ways it is now difficult to detect, for the simple reason that later writers adopted a number of his innovative views. This opinion is worth serious attention, not only because of the uncertainty caused by our lack of sources, but also because parts of the view of composition with which our poet presents us do bear a certain Aristophanic stamp. To give one example, Aristophanes' inventiveness might well be detectable in his representation of poets literally performing 'imitation', μίμησις, and literally 'making', ποιεῖν, their verses:[46] *mimesis* and *poiein* were most likely fashionable terms in literary theory in the latter half of the fifth century,[47] and a much-discussed comic technique of Aristophanes is that of making metaphors concrete.[48]

Position (ii) also finds some support from the interesting possibility that traces of Aristophanes' influence are to be found in later discussions of poetic

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[44]Trans. by Frank Jones, from Green and Lattimore 1958.

[45]Snell 1953, 115. This is a comment made more particularly about the *Frogs*, but his view is clear. He goes as far as saying (ibid.), 'even to-day's literary criticism is indebted to his influence', viewing Aristophanes as having provided an rough account of literary criticism which Plato systematized (116). Cf. Lucas 1968, xvi; Harriott 1969, 141-2. One clear difference between Aristophanic and Aristotelian approaches is that the former is character-based, the latter plot-based.

[46]Stohn 1993, 199, comments that Aristophanes' portrayal of Agathon's *mimesis* has to be in a 'bühnenwirksamer Form'; cf. Rau 1975, 343. Cantarella 1967, 12-5; Zeitlin 1981, 177-8; Muecke 1982, 53, and Stohn 1993, 199, all note the inherent contradiction in the Agathon scene created by the confusion of *poiein* and *mimesis*, namely that the poet must both *be* like the character for whom he is composing and *make himself* like the character.

[47]See Denniston 1927, 114; Webster 1939, 168-9; Müller 1974, 39; Stohn 1993, 205.

[48]Taillardat 1965, 498ff.; Newiger 1957, 122-33, esp. 132-3 and Rau 1975, 343. Muecke 1982 also comments in a similar vein on the use of ποιεῖν, 43, and μίμησις, 55. See the comments of Newiger 1957, 27, on the similar use of ταράττειν and κυκᾶν in the *Knights*.

composition. Such a suggestion must of course remain speculative but, for example, Aristophanes could well be the ultimate source of Aristotle's advice to the tragic poet to employ *skhêmasin*, 'gestures', whilst composing (1455a29).[49] What is more, Aristophanic influence may also account for Horace's reference to Telephos at *Ars Poetica* 104 (see above).[50] To maintain this view, it need not necessarily be argued that the Aristophanic scenes inspired Aristotle and Horace directly, but merely that Aristophanes had influenced the tradition on which such later writers drew.

IV

Whilst the two positions given above do not lack common ground, they remain essentially irreconcilable and we lack the corroborative evidence to support a conclusion either way. Whichever is the more accurate, however, through this brief discussion of Aristophanes' representation of the act of the compositional process we nonetheless gain a small but important insight into Aristophanes' sense of his own compositional technique. Judging from his depictions of Euripides and Agathon in the scenes discussed, it would appear that Aristophanes has taken a more or less prevalent view of literary composition, humorously developed it, and in so doing has made connections between different fields of thought. Most notably, he has made a link between contemporary views of composition and the nexus of ancient beliefs concerning clothing. He may also have been the first to articulate the notion of 'method composition'.

Our examination of these scenes has served two purposes: (i) we have formed a picture of Aristophanes' own view of the compositional process; (ii) we have investigated the nature of the imaginative connections that Aristophanes has made in order to form this view. To return to the problem posed at the beginning of this appendix, let us now briefly examine what overlap there is between the Aristophanic model of composition and my own model of humour perception.

There is, it would appear, some fascinating common ground between the Aristophanic view of the compositional process and the theory of humour articulated in this thesis. Before examining this common ground, however, let us first state a fundamental (and rather obvious) difference between the two,

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[49]See, however, n.24 above.

[50]I am indebted to Professor M. S. Silk for pointing out these possible correspondences.

namely that Aristophanes' views concern the production of text, my model its perception. Bearing this difference in mind, central parts of Aristophanes' view of composition - the composer's need of a certain mood to compose and the idea that the clothing and gestures of the composer have an effect on the textual product - may fruitfully be compared with a central part of *my* model: the concept of 'frames'. In my model, with its interest in the way in which text is *affective*, I have suggested that the frame of a text arouses certain expectations in the listener. These expectations in turn affect the way the listener perceives the textual product. In Aristophanes' model of composition, clothing and gestures act as something analogous to 'frames' for the composer as he creates text. These 'frames' affect the mood of the composer and thus his composition of the textual product. What in my model are abstract concepts which affect the listeners' perception of text are paralleled in Aristophanes by physical items and actions which affect the composer's production of text.[51]

Exciting as this parallel is, it would no doubt be imprudent to rate its significance too highly. Although tempting, one cannot, for example, claim for Aristophanes a conscious awareness of the concept of framing and the effect of textual frames on the listener's perception of text, even though such a proposition is plausible enough given the plentiful and intricate signals with which Aristophanes provides his audience (as investigated in Chapter Five). However cautious we wish to be when assessing the extent to which Aristophanes' own views on composition are captured in these scenes, the playful way in which he approaches the subject nevertheless allows us a glimpse of Aristophanes the humorist in action. Indeed, if we can say little else with certainty, we might at least proffer in conclusion that the inventive techniques which Aristophanes uses to create his own playful version of the process of creating text are part of a larger picture of comic composition. We have witnessed Aristophanes inventively develop contemporary views of composition and make connections between a nexus of ancient beliefs about clothing - and the abuse of standard logic and the marrying of ideas which are usually unconnected are key weapons in the armoury of many a humorous writer.

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[51]Cf. the Aristophanic practice of 'making metaphors concrete' discussed above.

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